

ISLAMIC EXTREMISM IN EUROPE

HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE AND EMERGING THREATS OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

APRIL 27, 2005

Serial No. 109-34

Printed for the use of the Committee on International Relations



Available via the World Wide Web: http://www.house.gov/international_relations

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

20-917PDF

WASHINGTON : 2005

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512-1800; DC area (202) 512-1800
Fax: (202) 512-2250 Mail: Stop SSOP, Washington, DC 20402-0001

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

HENRY J. HYDE, Illinois, *Chairman*

JAMES A. LEACH, Iowa	TOM LANTOS, California
CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, New Jersey, <i>Vice Chairman</i>	HOWARD L. BERMAN, California
DAN BURTON, Indiana	GARY L. ACKERMAN, New York
ELTON GALLEGLY, California	ENI F.H. FALEOMAVAEGA, American Samoa
ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, Florida	DONALD M. PAYNE, New Jersey
DANA ROHRABACHER, California	ROBERT MENENDEZ, New Jersey
EDWARD R. ROYCE, California	SHERROD BROWN, Ohio
PETER T. KING, New York	BRAD SHERMAN, California
STEVE CHABOT, Ohio	ROBERT WEXLER, Florida
THOMAS G. TANCREDI, Colorado	ELIOT L. ENGEL, New York
RON PAUL, Texas	WILLIAM D. DELAHUNT, Massachusetts
DARRELL ISSA, California	GREGORY W. MEEKS, New York
JEFF FLAKE, Arizona	BARBARA LEE, California
JO ANN DAVIS, Virginia	JOSEPH CROWLEY, New York
MARK GREEN, Wisconsin	EARL BLUMENAUER, Oregon
JERRY WELLER, Illinois	SHELLEY BERKLEY, Nevada
MIKE PENCE, Indiana	GRACE F. NAPOLITANO, California
THADDEUS G. McCOTTER, Michigan	ADAM B. SCHIFF, California
KATHERINE HARRIS, Florida	DIANE E. WATSON, California
JOE WILSON, South Carolina	ADAM SMITH, Washington
JOHN BOOZMAN, Arkansas	BETTY MCCOLLUM, Minnesota
J. GRESHAM BARRETT, South Carolina	BEN CHANDLER, Kentucky
CONNIE MACK, Florida	DENNIS A. CARDOZA, California
JEFF FORTENBERRY, Nebraska	
MICHAEL MCCAUL, Texas	
TED POE, Texas	

THOMAS E. MOONEY, SR., *Staff Director/General Counsel*

ROBERT R. KING, *Democratic Staff Director*

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE AND EMERGING THREATS

ELTON GALLEGLY, California, *Chairman*

JO ANN DAVIS, Virginia	ROBERT WEXLER, Florida
PETER T. KING, New York, <i>Vice Chairman</i>	ELIOT L. ENGEL, New York
THADDEUS G. McCOTTER, Michigan	SHELLEY BERKLEY, Nevada
DARRELL ISSA, California	GRACE F. NAPOLITANO, California
TED POE, Texas	ADAM B. SCHIFF, California
J. GRESHAM BARRETT, South Carolina	BEN CHANDLER, Kentucky

RICHARD MEREU, *Subcommittee Staff Director*

JONATHAN KATZ, *Democratic Professional Staff Member*

PATRICK PRISCO, *Professional Staff Member*

BEVERLY HALLOCK, *Staff Associate*

CONTENTS

	Page
WITNESSES	
Mr. Peter Bergen, Fellow, The New American Foundation	5
Mr. Matthew Levitt, Director, Terrorism Studies Program, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy	10
Mr. Lorenzo Vidino, Deputy Director, <i>The Investigative Project</i>	23
Mr. Claude Moniquet, President and Director General, European Strategic Intelligence and Security Center	31
LETTERS, STATEMENTS, ETC., SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING	
The Honorable Elton Gallegly, a Representative in Congress from the State of California, and Chairman, Subcommittee on Europe and Emerging Threats: Prepared statement	2
The Honorable Robert Wexler, a Representative in Congress from the State of Florida: Prepared statement	3
Mr. Peter Bergen: Prepared statement	6
Mr. Matthew Levitt: Prepared statement	12
Mr. Lorenzo Vidino: Prepared statement	25
Mr. Claude Moniquet: Prepared statement	33
APPENDIX	
Responses from Mr. Lorenzo Vidino to questions submitted for the record by the Honorable Ted Poe, a Representative in Congress from the State of Texas	49
Response from Mr. Matthew Levitt to question submitted for the record by the Honorable Ted Poe	50

ISLAMIC EXTREMISM IN EUROPE

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2005

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE AND EMERGING THREATS,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 2:19 p.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Elton Gallegly (Chairman of the Subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. GALLEGLY. I call to order the Subcommittee on Europe and Emerging Threats. Today the Subcommittee on Europe and Emerging Threats is holding a hearing on the growing problem of Islamic extremism in Europe.

Let me say at the outset that the title of the hearing does not in any way suggest that Islam lends itself to extremism or that most Muslims, whether they live in Europe or anywhere else in the world, support terrorism or hold extremist views toward the Western society or the United States.

However, we must face the fact that a small but growing number of people in Western Europe have joined jihadist groups. These groups pose a serious threat to the United States, U.S. interests in Europe and Europe itself.

This hearing will examine the nature and extent of this threat. I am particularly interested in assessing which European countries face the greatest threat from Islamic extremist groups, the causes of religious extremism, the ties of groups in Europe to al-Qaeda and other Middle East and North African terrorist groups and the ability of these groups to carry out attacks.

I view the cooperation between the United States and Europe as one of the bright spots in the transatlantic relationship. But I believe that we can and must do more, especially with respect to the sharing of intelligence on extremist groups, curtailing the travel of terrorists and the cutting off of their fundraising capacity. I also support a top-down review of the visa waiver program and on our border security program to make sure that the State Department, the Department of Homeland Security and the airlines are doing everything they can to prevent terrorists from entering the United States.

In this regard, last year as part of the National Intelligence Reform Act, I included several provisions that were aimed at making it more difficult for terrorists to enter the United States. Two of these provisions—expanding pre-inspection by DHS at foreign airports and placing DHS agents at foreign airports to assist airline personnel in the detection of fraudulent documents—were designed

to stop terrorists, including those who might be coming from Europe, from even boarding flights bound for the United States. I believe that the immediate implementation of these two provisions is something our Government can do right now to help keep America safer.

Finally, I would also like our witnesses to discuss the potential of extremist groups in Europe to obtain or develop weapons of mass destruction. Given the continued problems in securing our border with Mexico and Canada, I am concerned that dangerous weapons originating in Europe can pose a direct threat to our homeland.

With that, I would now defer to my good friend from Florida, the Ranking Member, Mr. Wexler.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gallegly follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ELTON GALLEGLY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE AND EMERGING THREATS

Today, the Subcommittee on Europe and Emerging Threats is holding a hearing on the growing problem of Islamic extremism in Europe.

Let me say at the outset that the title of the hearing does not in any way suggest that Islam lends itself to extremism or that most Muslims, whether they live in Europe or anywhere else in the world, support terrorism or hold extremist views toward Western society or the United States.

However, we must also face the fact that a small but growing number of people in Western Europe have joined jihadist groups. These groups pose a serious threat to the United States, U.S. interests in Europe and Europe itself.

This hearing will examine the nature and extent of this threat. I am particularly interested in assessing which European countries face the greatest threat from Islamic extremist groups, the causes of religious extremism, the ties of groups in Europe to al Qaeda and other Middle East and North African terrorist groups and the ability of these groups to carry out attacks.

I view the cooperation between the United States and Europe as one of the bright spots in the transatlantic relationship. But I believe we can and must do more, especially with respect to the sharing of intelligence on extremist groups, curtailing the travel of terrorists, and cutting off their fundraising capacity. I also support a top-down review of the visa waiver program and our border security system to make sure that the State Department, the Department of Homeland Security and the airlines are doing everything they can to prevent terrorists from entering the United States.

In this regard, last year as part of the National Intelligence Reform Act, I included several provisions that were aimed at making it more difficult for terrorists to enter the United States. Two of these provisions—expanding pre-inspection by DHS at foreign airports and placing DHS agents at foreign airports to assist airline personnel in the detection of fraudulent travel documents—were designed to stop terrorists, including those who might be coming from Europe, from even boarding flights bound for the U.S. I believe the immediate implementation of these two provisions is something our government can do right now to help keep Americans safer.

Finally, I would also like our witnesses to discuss the potential of extremist groups in Europe to obtain or develop weapons of mass destruction. Given the continued problems in securing our border with Mexico and Canada, I am concerned that dangerous weapons originating in Europe can pose a direct threat to our homeland.

I will now turn to Mr. Wexler for any opening statement he may wish to make.

Mr. WEXLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the witnesses, and thank you for being so patient. I will be brief.

I do not think there could be any more timely discussion than we are having today. When I was in France visiting with some of the leaders of the Islamic community there, I was overwhelmed with the sense of alienation that the Muslim community feels. Is this rightfully so or not? My understanding of a recent poll of European Muslims is that 80 percent of European Muslims feel victimized by

discrimination and harassment. Whether that is an accurate portrayal of the conditions in which European Muslims live or not, it is obviously significant if that is the perception that those residents have.

I was struck by the fact, if I understand it correctly, that a strategic decision was made—which I believe is shared by most, if not all, of the European countries—that there be no training of Islamic clerics within France or within Europe and that most, if not all, of the religious leaders in those communities are imported in. Therefore, the hope that there would emerge a moderate clerical base educated and brought up in France or any other western European country seems to have not materialized. I would be curious if you could address that aspect of what the problem is in terms of Islamic extremism.

Could you also expand on whether there is any tie to be made in terms of Turkey's entrance and negotiations regarding the European Union? Is there any connection between Turkey's entrance into the European Union and the process that will be undertaken and Islamic efforts of assimilation and/or then ultimately leading, if there is no assimilation to extremism? Or is the Turkey experience just entirely separate from Moroccans or Algerians or anyone else that may feel that they have been discriminated against? I would be very curious to hear what the speakers have to say.

If I could conclude with this; what role does the United States have, if at all, in helping, assisting, and/or commenting with respect to the failure, at least in many respects of the Muslim community, to be adequately assimilated into the European nations? What role do we have?

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for calling this hearing and giving me this opportunity.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wexler follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE ROBERT WEXLER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding today's hearing on Islamic extremism in Europe. I would also like to thank our distinguished guests for joining us today.

Despite significant policy disagreements between the Bush Administration and some European allies surrounding the Iraq War, transatlantic cooperation in the war against terror has deepened, and is certain to grow stronger in the months and years ahead. As shared victims of terror, the United States and Europe must stand united in formulating a joint response.

Events, such as the Madrid bombing; the 2003 suicide bombing in Israel by two British citizens; the 2003 arrest of Richard Reid; and the recent assassination of Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh, all demonstrate that terrorist organizations in Europe remain active. This has significant implications for America because the most pressing threats from groups like Al Qaeda stem from affiliated organizations in Europe and European individuals, organizations and cells.

European governments must do more to address the alienation of Islamic communities, where over 80 percent of European Muslims feel victimized by discrimination and harassment according to a recent poll. This, in turn, provides fodder to those who exploit Islam to promote their narrow political goals. The result has been increased support for terror, and rising anti-Americanism, anti-Israel sentiment and anti-Semitism in Europe commensurate with ongoing violence in the Middle East.

This is most clear in France—home to Europe's largest Jewish and Muslim populations—where Islamic extremism has been cited as a root cause of increased anti-Semitism in the past five years. I have previously commended the French for steps taken to curb anti-Semitic hate crimes, though I am deeply concerned about recent studies indicating that anti-Semitic incidents have increased by more than 50% in France in 2004.

Last year, I met with the head of the Muslim community in Paris to discuss this and other related matters. In our meeting, he outlined factors contributing to the rise of Islamic extremism, such as the influx of foreign imams preaching fundamentalism in the mosque and inadequate government assistance to the community as whole. These problems are indicative of a larger issue surrounding some European governments' handling of rapidly changing demographics. It is clear that the threats emanating from isolated Muslim communities may decrease through enhanced integration of Muslims into Europe—including the accession of Turkey to the EU.

Mr. Chairman, despite some success in the war on terror, the United States and Europe remain vulnerable to impending security threats. Europe served as the nerve center for Al Qaeda prior to 9/11 and is still used as a haven for affiliates of Al Qaeda, Hezbollah and Ansar-Al-Islam. As such, the EU and individual Member States must take a stronger stance against terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah, which—according to Palestinian sources—poses the greatest threat to the tenuous situation in Gaza and the West Bank. In the past month alone, the House of Representatives passed a resolution urging the EU to add Hezbollah to its terrorist list and the EU Parliament passed a similar resolution recommending that the EU Council take “all necessary steps to curtail” Hezbollah given its ongoing support of terror. Despite such action, the EU has failed to add Hezbollah to its terrorist list, leaving operatives and finances freely flowing throughout the EU. At this precarious time in the Middle East, I hope the EU will heed the calls of Congress and the EU Parliament and add Hezbollah to its terrorist list, which—in my mind—is long overdue.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses as they outline the scope and severity of this global threat and present options for eradicating Muslim extremism in the future.

Mr. GALLEGLY. I thank the gentleman from Florida.

At this point I would like to introduce our witnesses. Our first witness is Peter Bergen, who is a Fellow at The New American Foundation where he researches and writes on international terrorism and the al-Qaeda network. He is also Adjunct Professor at the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins. Mr. Bergen is CNN's Terrorism Analyst and author of *Holy War, Inc.: Inside the Secret World of Osama bin Laden*. In addition, Mr. Bergen has written articles for such numerous publications including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *The Washington Times* and *Foreign Affairs*.

The second witness is Matthew Levitt, who is a Senior Fellow and Director of the Terrorism Studies Program at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy. Mr. Levitt has also worked as an FBI Analyst for counterterrorism operations. In that capacity Mr. Levitt earned letters of commendation and five awards in recognition of superior service. Mr. Levitt currently serves on the Council of Foreign Relations focusing on terrorism financing issues.

Our third witness is Lorenzo Vidino, who is the Deputy Director for *The Investigative Project*. Mr. Vidino is an expert on terrorism in Europe and al-Qaeda. His articles on terrorism and Middle Eastern affairs have appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*, *National Review On-Line*, *The National Interest* and several European newspapers. Mr. Vidino has also been a commentator on terrorism issues on MSNBC, Fox News and NBC.

Our fourth witness is Claude Moniquet, who is the President of European Strategic Intelligence and Security Center, a think tank based in Brussels specialized in counterterrorism, intelligence and international security issues. Mr. Moniquet has also had considerable experience covering terrorism as a journalist for over 20 years and is a Reserve Intelligence Officer in the French Army. Mr. Moniquet has written several books on religious extremism and

terrorism and has worked as an Intelligence and Terrorism Consultant for CNN.

Gentlemen, I know that there is a lot that you would like to present today to provide us with a wealth of information, but in the interest of time I would ask unanimous consent that your entire statement be made a part of the record, and if you could condense and limit your statements to as close to 5 minutes as possible, I would appreciate it.

With that, Mr. Bergen, welcome.

**STATEMENT OF MR. PETER BERGEN, FELLOW, THE NEW
AMERICAN FOUNDATION**

Mr. BERGEN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for giving me this opportunity to testify. In my view, the greatest threat from al-Qaeda and its affiliated groups come from Europe today. There are four strands to this argument. One, we have not really seen much evidence of real al-Qaeda sleeper cells in the country since 9/11. The second strand is the significant terrorist attacks we have seen in the past decade have had a European dimension to them in this country. Thirdly, we have seen, with the Madrid attacks and also the recent terrorist plots uncovered in London, that there is a serious group of sleeper cells in Europe who have the capacity and the motivation to attack us in the United States. Finally, this threat will increase over time. We have the unfortunate confluence of rising Muslim immigration into Europe, a certain amount of European racism and a certain amount of Muslim alienation.

This problem is going to increase over time because Europeans have very expensive social welfare retirement programs, and they are basically going out of business. I mean, Italians as a group are not reproducing fast enough to replace themselves. They are going to have to import a lot of labor to pay for their programs and to do their jobs, so this feeling of alienation is going to increase very strongly.

There were only 1 million Muslims in Europe in 1945. Now there are as many as 20 million. There were no Muslims in Spain under Franco. Now there are a million. There were no Muslims in Germany until after World War II. Now there are 5 million. These people are not integrating. As Congressman Wexler indicated, there is a real feeling of alienation.

In my presentation I am focusing on Britain, where there is a 28 percent unemployment rate for people between the ages of 16 and 24. When you ask the question, "What is the war on terrorism?," 80 percent of British Muslims say it is a war against Islam. When you ask the question, "Would you be in favor of another attack by al-Qaeda against the United States or an al-Qaeda-like organization?," 13 percent of British Muslims say that they would approve of that. That is a pretty astonishing figure.

My presentation will largely focus on Britain because I think the problem there is particularly high. I also have some personal experience, having grown up there.

I think you will see, if you look at the cases since 9/11, who has actually attacked us in any meaningful way. Richard Reid was not an American sleeper cell, he was a British citizen; the so-called "Shoe Bomber" who got a case of cold feet on the American Airlines

flight from Paris to Miami. His colleague was recently also charged in London, another British citizen, a week ago who is going to serve 13 years for his part in the shoe bomb plot.

Omar Sheikh, who kidnapped and murdered Danny Pearl in Pakistan, is a British citizen who went to London's School of Economics; a highly educated guy.

We have also seen recently in Britain some very serious plots. One example is the ammonium nitrate plot. Half a ton of ammonium nitrate, the very material that was used in Oklahoma City and also in the Bali attack, was found near Heathrow Airport. This indicated a serious attack. An attack in London, by the way, is not only an attack on the English, it is an attack on us. If you blew up a significant bomb in the City of London in the financial center, that would have a devastating effect on global markets and, of course, the American economy. If you detonated a radiological device—the Chairman was interested in the WMD question. A readily simple dirty radiological bomb in the City of London would basically close down world markets.

We do not need to be concerned about it just being a European problem: (A) We have seen that it is the Europeans, and particularly British, that have done a lot of these attacks; and (B) A certain kind of attack in Europe would have a devastating effect in the United States.

I just wanted to mention a couple people by name as being indicative of the problem that Congressman Wexler talked about, the fact that so many of the religious figures in Europe are not coming out of some European system. They are imported from other countries.

Abu Hamza was the imam of the Finsbury Park Mosque where both Zacarias Moussawi and Richard Reid worshipped. He has finally, after many years, been arrested both on an American extradition warrant and also the British finally got around to their own charges against him. He is indicative of the kinds of extremist mullahs and imams that we have seen in England. Unfortunately, there is another one who has not been arrested as yet, Omar Bakri Muhammad. He is implicated in the ammonium nitrate plot I just described, and he is also implicated in the Mike's Place attack in Tel Aviv, which I think is very significant. Two second-generation British middle-class people go into Mike's Place, an Israeli jazz club, blow themselves up; a suicide attack. This is the very first time a Brit has ever been involved in a suicide attack. If a British person can do a suicide attack in Israel 2 years ago, they certainly can do one here.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bergen follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. PETER BERGEN, FELLOW, THE NEW AMERICAN FOUNDATION

The greatest threat to the United States from al Qaeda, its affiliated groups, or those animated by al Qaeda's ideology, emanates today from Europe. There are four strands to this argument which will be amplified in my testimony. The first, is that there is little or no evidence of American " sleeper cells " found in the US since the 9/11 attacks. Secondly, the most significant Islamist terrorist plots in the United States in the past decade have generally not involved " sleeper cells, " but rather terrorists who have come into the U.S. from abroad, often from Europe. Third, in 2004, we saw with the Madrid attacks and the disruption of serious terrorist plots in London that there are European sleeper cells that have the ability and motivation to

carry out major terrorist operations, and even, perhaps, to attack the United States itself. Fourth, the European threat from militant jihadists will likely increase over time as declining European populations are replaced by rising Muslim immigration into Europe, a combination of circumstances that is generating, and will continue to generate, rising Muslim alienation in many European countries, and a significant amount of backlash against Muslim immigrants in countries such as the Netherlands.

Since the 9/11 attacks we have seen little evidence of US sleeper cells. The terrorism cases that American officials have prosecuted since 9/11 have often followed the trajectory of an initial trumpeting by the government only to collapse, or to be revealed as something less than earth shattering, when the details emerge months later. Remember Chaplin James Yee the “spy” at Guantanamo who turned out to be cheating not on his country, but on his wife? Or, the unfortunate Oregon lawyer who was busted for his role in the Madrid bombing attacks, but was, in fact, thousands of miles from Spain at the time of the bombings? Or how the Justice Department held a press conference to announce the disruption of a Buffalo, New York “al Qaeda terrorist cell,” when in reality those arrested had made the dumb mistake of lying to federal investigators about briefly attending a Taliban training camp? There was no evidence that those arrested in Buffalo were involved in terrorism of any kind, or had ever been part of al Qaeda.

Indeed, an authoritative survey by NYU’s Center on Law and Security released in February found that of the hundred and twenty criminal cases that the Bush administration has pursued under the rubric of the war on terrorism since 9/11, “the courts have indicted relatively few individuals on the charge of direct acts of terrorism and convicted only one (Richard Reid),” the so-called shoe bomber who, of course wasn’t a “sleeper cell”, but a British-Jamaican who tried to blow up an American Airlines flight he boarded not in Paris, Texas, but in Paris, France. (Since the NYU report was published, French citizen Zacarias Moussawi has also pled guilty to planning to attack the White House.)

The American sleeper cell phenomenon has been exaggerated by both US officials and overheated stories in the media, but that is not to say that such sleepers have not existed in the past. Ali Mohamed, a member of al Qaeda who played a role in planning the 1998 bombing of the US embassy in Kenya, for instance, was a US Army sergeant in the late ‘80s who married a Mexican-American woman, and was working as a computer network specialist in California when he was finally arrested after the Kenya embassy attack, fourteen years after he first settled in the States. However, since 9/11 there has been no evidence of sleepers like Ali Mohamed operating in the U.S. At a certain point these sleeper cells are either so asleep that they are effectively dead, or they simply don’t exist. The onset of the Iraq war and the presidential election both offered perfect symbolic occasions for the supposed cells to strike, but nothing happened. The 9/11 Commission concluded, building on the work of the largest criminal investigation in history, that the hijackers did not plug into a support network in this country. This fact, taken together with the tiny number of real terrorism cases post-9/11 and the absence of terrorist attacks in the US over the past three and a half years, leads one to surmise that there are no American sleeper cells. And support for this view came from an unlikely quarter in March 2005: The FBI, in a leaked report, concluded that “US Government efforts to date also have not revealed evidence of concealed cells or networks acting in the homeland as sleepers.”

That’s the good news. But is that the real problem, anyway? There have indeed been a small number of terrorist sleepers that have embedded themselves in American society for many years such as Ali Mohamed, but the real threat from Islamist terrorism in the U.S. has historically come from visitors to the country. That was the case in the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center, the mastermind of which, Ramzi Yousef, arrived from Pakistan intent on attacking American targets, and it was also the case of the 9/11 attackers. And it was also true of Ahmed Ressaam, who was stopped at a Canadian border crossing in December 1999 on a mission to bomb Los Angeles airport, and of the shoe bomber, Richard Reid, and also of Zacarias Moussawi.

Today, the Islamist terrorist threat to Americans largely emanates from Europe, not from domestic sleeper cells or, as is popularly imagined, the graduates of Pakistani madrassas who can do little more than read the Koran and so do not have either the linguistic or technical skills to make them a serious threat. Omar Sheikh, for instance, the kidnapper of Wall Street Journal reporter, Danny Pearl, is a British citizen of Pakistani descent who graduated not from a madrassa, but from the academically rigorous London School of Economics. Richard Reid is also British, as is Saajid Badat who last week pled guilty in London to training in Afghanistan to use a shoe bomb similar to Reid’s to blow up a transatlantic flight in late 2001.

(Badat got cold feet and bailed out of the plot). Similarly, al Qaeda member Zacarias Moussawi is French; Ahmed Ressam became radicalized in Italy, and the 9/11 pilots turned to the most militant form of Islam while living in Hamburg. Indeed, last month, at a conference marking the first anniversary of the Madrid bombing, Robert Leiken, of the Nixon Center, presented his study of 373 radical Muslim terrorists arrested or killed in Europe and the United States from 1993 through 2004, of which an astonishing 41 percent were Western nationals, who were either naturalized or second generation Europeans, or were converts to Islam. Leiken found more terrorists who were French than the combined totals of Pakistani and Yemeni terrorists!

Future terrorist attacks that will be damaging to American national security are therefore likely to have a European connection. Citizens of the European Union who adopt al Qaeda's ideology can both move around Europe easily and also have easy entrée into the United States because of the Visa Waiver Program that exists with European countries. European members of al Qaeda, for instance, could either come to the US to launch a significant attack on the scale of what took place in Madrid last March, or they could launch a major terrorist strike in Europe—such as a radio-logical 'dirty' bomb attack in the City of London, a key financial center—that would have a devastating effect on the global economy, and by extension the American economy.

As the eminent French scholar, Gilles Kepel, has pointed out: "The war for Muslim minds around the world may turn on the outcome" of how European Muslims deal with Islamist militancy in their midst, and the extent to which European Muslims can be truly integrated into their host societies. This will not be something that can be achieved quickly. First, there is the matter of numbers. France alone is host to some five million Muslims, about as many Muslims as live in the United States. And while only a handful of American Muslims have proven susceptible to al Qaeda's ideology (in this instance, the American Dream seems to really work) that is not so with a substantial minority of Europe's Muslims, many of whom are relatively recent arrivals. In 1945 less than one million Muslims lived in Europe. There are now as many as 20 million, a good number of whom are having problems integrating into their host countries because, by and large, Muslims in Europe are more discriminated against than Muslims in the United States. Algerians in France and Pakistanis in Britain, for instance, are often treated as second-class citizens.

A survey of Islamist militant groups and Islamist extremism in Europe would merit a book in itself, so my testimony will focus on the threat emanating from Britain, a country that illustrates many of the features of the wider European problem, and where the threat from Islamist extremists is especially high. In 2004 Sir John Stevens London's former Metropolitan Police Commissioner warned that an Islamist extremist attack in London was "inevitable," while a government report estimated that between ten and fifteen thousand British Muslims are supporters of al Qaeda or related groups. The estimate was based on intelligence, opinion polls, and a report that eight thousand Muslims last year attended a conference held by Hizb-ut-Tahir, which the Home Office describes as an extremist organization. British authorities believe that between three and six hundred British citizens were trained in al Qaeda and Taliban camps in Afghanistan. And several hundred men are believed to have fought in Kashmir and returned to Britain in the 1990s. In March, Sir Ian Blair, the present Metropolitan Police Commissioner, told a radio interviewer "I agree with the Prime Minister's assessment . . . that there are hundreds of people who came back from the [Afghan training] camps and are now in the United Kingdom, and that is a very dangerous issue." Indeed, Sir Ian recently cautioned that terrorists could see the upcoming British general election on May 5th as "a real opportunity."

Most British Muslims are young and many are poorly integrated into society and therefore vulnerable to extremism. Seventy percent of them are under thirty years old, compared to forty-five percent for the UK as a whole. The unemployment rate among the British Muslim community runs ten percentage points above the national average of 5%. In the case of 16–24 year old Muslim men the unemployment rate is 28%. And, unsurprisingly, a sense of anger shows up in polling data among British Muslims. Eight out of ten believe that the war on terrorism is a war on Islam, while a poll conducted last year under the auspices of *The Guardian* newspaper found a surprising 13% who said that further attacks by al Qaeda or similar organizations on the United States would be justified. This sort of sentiment can be found in a rap video that surfaced last year called "Dirty Kuffar" the lyrics of which included the following verse, "OBL [bin Laden] pulled me like a shining star! Like the way we destroyed them two towers, ha-ha!"

London—known for these purposes as Londonistan—has attracted a wide range of Islamist militants in the past decade who are inspired by the actions and rhetoric

of bin Laden. One of the most well known is the one-eyed cleric, Abu Hamza, who until 2003 was the imam of the Finsbury Park Mosque, where both Zacarias Moussawi and Richard Reid worshipped. Serious Arab opposition figures in London regard Abu Hamza as a self-publicizing joke, as he is neither a profound scholar of Islam, nor an important political figure. But, as we shall see, sometimes jokes can turn deadly serious. And the story of Abu Hamza is also emblematic of how young British men are incited to acts of terrorism, and the somewhat slow response of the UK authorities to clamp down on those who abuse its honorable tradition of tolerating dissident views.

In late 1998, after Abu Hamza had called for the killings of “non-believers” in Yemen, a group of eight second-generation British Muslims of Asian and Middle Eastern parentage, several of whom had ties to Abu Hamza, responded to that call. One was his son, Mohammad; another was his son-in law. The eight Britons, aged between 17 and 33, grew up in the Midlands or the London area. Most of them had gone to school for courses in business studies, computers or accounting, and those who had jobs, worked in unexceptional lines of work like the insurance business. They told those who asked that they were on vacation to Yemen to visit family members, or pick up some Arabic. But a routine traffic stop by a Yemeni cop near Aden on December 24, 1998 unraveled a far more interesting tale. Inside the car were three of the Brits who sped away, only to be quickly arrested. Their arrests led the Yemeni government to a house where they found a trove of items not normally associated with a quiet vacation: mines, rocket launchers, computers, and encrypted communication equipment. The Yemeni government said that the Brits were planning a veritable festival of Christmas bombing attacks in Aden, directed at a church; the British consulate, and an American demining team working in the area.

Five days after the Brits were arrested, eighteen tourists from the United States, Britain, and Australia vacationing in Yemen were seized by a group of jihadist kidnappers who were hoping to spring their British colleagues from jail. The leader of the kidnappers was in touch by phone with Abu Hamza during the operation. A botched rescue effort by the Yemeni army led to the deaths of four of the tourists. It took six years until Abu Hamza was finally arrested in the spring of 2004 on extradition charges from the United States on the grounds that he had provided recruits to al Qaeda in Afghanistan, and that he was involved in the 1998 Yemen attack. Last August, British authorities also belatedly brought charges against Hamza for inciting racial hatred.

Another flamboyant, London-based Islamist militant is Sheik Omar Bakri Muhammad, a Syrian who styles himself the judge of his own *sharia* court. In 1997, Bakri founded Al-Muhajiroun, an organization that attracted much media attention before its official disbanding in October 2004. Just as Abu Hamza influenced some impressionable second-generation British Muslims to try and attack western targets in Yemen in 1998 so too Bakri seems to have been a spiritual mentor for two second-generation, college-educated, middle-class men of Pakistani heritage who, on April 30, 2003, walked into Mike’s Place, a busy jazz club near the US embassy in Israel, on a suicide mission. Once inside the club, the younger of the two men succeeded in detonating a bomb, killing himself and three bystanders, while the other man fled the scene. Bakri told the *Daily Telegraph* that he knew one of the Mike’s Place attackers, Omar Sharif, “very well and he used to attend regularly at my sessions. He was my brother and I am very proud of him and any Muslim who will do the same as him.”

The Mike’s Place bombing was highly unusual; it was the first time that a UK citizen had committed an act of suicide terrorism in Israel. If such an attack can happen in Israel it can also happen in the United States. The Mike’s Place attack demonstrates that the US might be vulnerable to suicide attackers who are British or are nationals of other European countries.

Omar Bakri has also been connected to a recent significant terrorist plot; the alleged plan by a group of young Islamic men to use half a ton of ammonium nitrate stored near Heathrow to blow up targets in the UK. Ammonium nitrate was the material used in the Oklahoma City bomb that killed 168 people and also in the attack on the discotheque in Bali that killed 200 tourists. In March 2004, nine suspects were arrested in Luton, west London and Sussex in raids on twenty-four homes, following two months of surveillance. Eight of the nine arrested are of Pakistani descent. All were born and raised in Britain, and many are middle class. The uncle of two brothers charged in the plot told reporters that it had been Bakri’s Al-Muhajiroun that had radicalized his nephews. The trial of five of those arrested is due to start in September 2005.

Also in 2004, police arrested twelve other terrorist suspects, aged nineteen to thirty-two, including senior al Qaeda operative, Issa al-Britani. Many of the suspects

were British citizens of Pakistani descent, and some had fought in Kashmir in the 1990s. Raids were conducted in north London, Watford, Luton, and Blackburn, and police seized an estimated \$360,000 worth of equipment, including one hundred computers and two hundred mobile phones. The U.S. accuses al-Britani of casing financial targets in New York and Washington between August of 2000 and April of 2001. Those targets included the IMF, the World Bank, the Prudential building in Newark and the New York Stock Exchange. Al-Britani's arrest resulted in the Department of Homeland Security elevating the threat level to orange this past summer.

Al-Britani, age thirty-two, was born in Britain or moved there when he was young. He fought in Kashmir in the 1990s after converting to Islam (from Hinduism) in his twenties, instructed militants in al Qaeda's Afghanistan camps, and later wrote "The Army of Madinah in Kashmir." The book details strategies for conducting jihad, including the use of "germ warfare." The 9-11 Commission concluded that Al-Britani traveled with Tawfiq bin Attash, one of bin Laden's bodyguards, to Kuala Lumpur in January 2000. This visit occurred several days before the Kuala Lumpur meeting where the September 11 attacks were discussed. From interrogations of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed (KSM) U.S. investigators believe that bin Laden told al-Britani through KSM to conduct surveillance of financial and Jewish targets in New York and Washington in 2001. British investigators also believe that al-Britani began planning to attack a British target in January 2000, potentially the Heathrow Express, which connects Heathrow airport with downtown London.

Since 9/11 British citizens have planned the kidnapping-murder of American journalist Danny Pearl, attempted to bring down U.S. airliners with shoe bombs, contemplated additional attacks on financial landmarks in New York and Washington, and have carried out suicide operations in Israel. This record demonstrates that Islamist militant groups in the United Kingdom, as is the case in several other major European countries, represent a threat not only to their own homelands, but also to the United States.

Mr. BARRETT [presiding]. Thank you, Mr. Bergen. I appreciate that.

Mr. Levitt, welcome. I am excited to hear your testimony today.

STATEMENT OF MR. MATTHEW LEVITT, DIRECTOR, TERRORISM STUDIES PROGRAM, THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY

Mr. LEVITT. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member of the Committee. It is a pleasure to be here.

The rise of global jihadist movements in Europe is alarming not only because of the threat such movements pose to our European allies, but because Europe has served as a launching pad, as Peter noted, for terrorist operatives planning attacks elsewhere; not only for those behind 9/11, Richard Reid and other individuals, but other groups as well. I would like to highlight the non-global jihadist groups because you have before you, in my colleagues here, some experts on the global jihadist movement.

Hezbollah operatives have launched attacks against Israel from Europe. Hamas operatives have plotted and funded suicide and other attacks against civilians in Israel from Europe as well. While terrorist groups remain the central structural unit in international terrorism, terrorist groups today are better described as networked groups tied together by individual relationships than as clearly defined organizations that are structured and discrete.

The relationships between individual terrorists affiliated with different groups are paramount, especially when operating in Diaspora communities like Europe and, for that matter, the United States. This crossover, this cross-pollination, facilitates cooperation among groups, including operational cooperation, but even more so interconnectivity at the logistical and financial support levels, in-

cluding among groups that are not part of the global jihadist movement.

It is important to highlight a few themes. First, there is a common ideological and theological jihadist foundation and world view among groups that belong to al-Qaeda, al-Qaeda affiliates and even groups like Hamas. Consider someone like Muhammad Zouaydi, who is one of the heads of the al-Qaeda cell in Madrid. On top of financing the Hamburg cell and several of the individuals who are now on trial in Spain, he was also sending money in at least two instances to Hamas.

Consider Sheikh Muhammad al-Moayad, who was recently convicted in a court in Brooklyn following a joint operation with the Germans. Allow me to quote from one of the transcripts entered in that case. Asked by a cooperating witness who was posing as a jihadist financier if the money he was purportedly going to be giving would go to Hamas or al-Qaeda, because he really wanted it to go to fighting, not just to social services, Sheikh al-Moayad said, "Look, any organization. Anything. Hamas, al-Qaeda or whatever. As long as it is for jihad." The jihadists themselves do not make the distinctions that we sometimes make between al-Qaeda and Hamas.

Sheikh Abdullah Azam, for example, was not only one of the first Palestinian terrorists to have a world view of a major jihad against Israel, but of course teamed up with Osama bin Laden to create the Maqtabol Kidma, the backbone of what became al-Qaeda.

Second, it is just a small step from justifying terrorism in some circumstances, terrorism against Israel or terrorism that is perhaps "resistance" to justifying it in other scenarios. Consider the Saudi experience of tolerating jihad abroad, which created an atmosphere that bred jihad at home. Consider also Khalid Sheikh Muhammad, who we now know was extremely motivated by the Palestinian question in particular, but chose to express that by attacking the United States.

Third, the EU, as a member of the Quartet, has a special obligation. Beyond whatever threat groups like Hamas or Hezbollah pose directly in Europe or whatever threat they pose by creating a jihadist environment in Europe, they have a special obligation to stop any financial support, certainly operational activity in Europe that can undermine the peace process.

Just in the past few weeks not America, not Israel, but the Palestinians have complained to the Europeans that Hezbollah and certain Palestinian groups are the greatest potential threat to the peace process, and that is something that we need to pay attention to, especially in light of the case of Mike's Place, that Peter just highlighted.

Finally, such groups do pose threats to Europe as well. In the case of Hezbollah, almost every international cell has direct ties to Iranian intelligence. Cells are multi-tasking. To quote a U.S. intelligence official that I interviewed for a project I am working on, almost all Hezbollah cells he knows of he said are "a bit operational."

If we could put those slides that I gave you up on the screen for a minute? I would like to highlight from a case here in the United States that you cannot necessarily identify Hezbollah or Hamas operatives by someone who wears a headband on their head. Here

you are looking at a picture of three members of a Hezbollah cell in Canada.

Next slide, please. Here you are looking at members of the Charlotte Hezbollah cell that came into the United States via Cyprus, which granted is at the periphery of Europe, but Europe nonetheless.

Next slide, please. Here you are looking at the leader and one of the members of the Charlotte cell posing outside the White House. You know, people blend in, and if we do not pay very close attention to the presence of such groups in the United States, in Europe, we are going to have a problem especially in the case of Hezbollah if they are in fact all "a bit operational."

There is a history of Hezbollah conducting operations in Europe and elsewhere. I go into them in my written testimony. Germany is currently concerned over the presence of some 800 Hezbollah members there. Hezbollah has used Europe as a launching pad for operations in Israel.

In the case of Hamas, Bank al-Taqwa headquartered out of Europe has been known to finance Hamas and several global jihadist groups. The al-Aqsa International Foundation headquartered in Germany with offices throughout the world, including Yemen, where it was headed by Sheikh Moayad, who I just mentioned, financed Hamas and al-Qaeda. In the case of Ismael Elbarasse in the U.S., the FBI highlighted its concern that al-Qaeda, lacking mid- and senior-level operatives, has begun to recruit trained Hamas operatives. I guarantee you that if that is what they are doing in this country, we need to be concerned about it happening in Europe as well.

Finally, failure to pay attention to all terrorist groups that are based on a global jihadist's ideology is a critical barrier to effective international counterterrorism cooperation. It is like being in a rowboat with two holes and only plugging up one of them. There are so many overlapping relationships, especially at the logistical and financial support levels, that if we do not look at the macro picture we are going to fail to wrap up all the necessary cells to bring greater security to our citizens.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Levitt follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. MATTHEW LEVITT, DIRECTOR, TERRORISM STUDIES PROGRAM, THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The rise of global jihadist movements in Europe is alarming, not only because of the threat such movements pose to our European allies but because Europe has served as a launching pad for terrorist operatives plotting attacks elsewhere. As the 9/11 trial just begun in Spain highlights, the 9/11 hijackers and their logistical and financial collaborators plotted and planned their operations in Europe. Similarly, Richard Reid's failed shoe-bombing of a U.S. airliner was plotted and launched from Europe; Hezbollah operatives have launched attacks against Israel from Europe; and Hamas operatives have plotted and funded suicide and other terrorist attacks against civilians in Israel from Europe as well.

While terrorist groups remain the central structural unit in international terrorism, terrorist groups today are better described as networked groups tied together by individual relationships than as clearly defined organizations that are structured and discrete. The relationships between individual terrorists affiliated with different groups are paramount, especially when operating within Diaspora communities in places like Europe and the United States. This crossover and polli-

nation facilitates cooperation among groups, including operational cooperation but far more often interconnectivity at the logistical and financial support levels. Such links exist even between groups that do not share similar ideologies, leading to cooperation between religious zealots and secular radicals; between ideologically- or theologically-driven terrorists and criminal entities (as has been the case in several terrorist attacks in Iraq, where criminal elements played critical roles in return for monetary compensation); between Sunni and Shi'a groups; and between individuals whose person-to-person contacts require no agreement between their respective headquarters.

As such, it should not surprise that several investigations into al-Qaeda operatives in Europe and elsewhere revealed significant crossover to terrorist elements tied to Hamas. A particularly interesting example is the Madrid Al-Qaeda cell, perhaps the most important cell broken up since 9/11. Around April 2002, Spanish authorities searched the home and offices of Muhammad Zouaydi, a senior al-Qaeda financier in Madrid. Investigators found a five-page fax dated October 24, 2001, revealing that Zouaydi was not only financing the Hamburg cell responsible for the September 11 attacks, but also Hamas. In the fax, which Zouaydi kept for his records, the Hebron Muslim Youth Association solicited funds from the Islamic Association of Spain. According to Spanish prosecutors, "the Hebron Muslim Youth Association is an organization known to belong to the Palestinian terrorist organization Hamas which is financed by activists of said organization living abroad."¹ Spanish police also say Zouaydi gave a total of almost \$6,600 marked "Gifts for Palestine" to Sheikh Helal Jamal, a Palestinian religious figure in Madrid tied to Hamas.²

The al-Taqwa banking system—with offices in Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Italy and the Caribbean—also facilitated the financing of multiple terrorist organizations, including Hamas. Bank al-Taqwa was added to the U.S. Treasury Department's terrorism list in November 2001 for "provid[ing] cash transfer mechanisms for Al Qaida."³ and European intelligence services confirm "al-Taqwa used Hamas funds in the late 1990s."⁴ Subsequent investigation has determined al-Taqwa was established in 1988 with financing from the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. According to the U.S. Treasury Department, "\$60 million collected annually for Hamas was moved to accounts with Bank al-Taqwa."⁵ Al-Taqwa shareholders include known Hamas members and individuals linked to al-Qaeda.⁶ Ghalib Himmat, noted for his ties to the International Islamic Charity Organization (IICO), another charity suspected of financing Hamas, is also an executive of the al-Taqwa banking network. Moreover, a 1996 report by Italian intelligence further linked al-Taqwa to Hamas and other Palestinian groups, as well as to the Algerian Armed Islamic Group and the Egyptian al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya.⁷

Beyond the presence in Europe of global jihadists tied to the al-Qaeda network, the activities of groups like Hamas and Hezbollah also pose significant national security risks. Contrary to conventional wisdom, however, these risks are not limited to the terrorist attacks these groups plot against Israel, they include risks to the countries in which they are operating and to the United States as well.

HEZBOLLAH IN EUROPE

Highlights of Hezbollah's record of terror attacks include suicide truck bombings targeting US and French forces in Beirut (in 1983 and 1984) and U.S. forces again in Saudi Arabia (in 1996), its record of suicide bombing attacks targeting Jewish and Israeli interests such as those in Argentina (1992 and 1994) and in Thailand

¹ Central Trial Court No. 5, Spanish National High Court (*Audiencia Nacional*), CASE 35/2002 (ordinary procedure), Don Baltasar Garzon Real, Magistrado Juez del Juzgado Central de Instrucción, July 19, 2002

² Central Trial Court No. 5, Spanish National High Court (*Audiencia Nacional*), CASE 35/2002 (ordinary procedure), Don Baltasar Garzon Real, Magistrado Juez del Juzgado Central de Instrucción, July 19, 2002

³ Statement of John B. Taylor, US Department of the Treasury, November 7, 2001, <http://www.treas.gov/press/releases/po771.htm>

⁴ Rohan Gunaratna, *Inside Al Qaeda: Global Network of Terror* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002). P. 69; Confirmed in conversations the author held with European intelligence officials in September 2003.

⁵ Testimony of Juan C. Zarate, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Terrorism and Violent Crime, U.S. Department of the Treasury, House Financial Subcommittee Oversight and Investigations, February 12, 2002

⁶ Lucy Komisar, "Shareholders in the Bank of Terror?" Salon.com, March 15, 2002; and Mark Hosenball, "Terror's Cash Flow," Newsweek, March 25, 2002

⁷ Lucy Komisar, "Shareholders in the Bank of Terror?" Salon.com, March 15, 2002; and Mark Hosenball, "Terror's Cash Flow," Newsweek, March 25, 2002

(attempted in 1994), and a host of other plots targeting American, French, German, British, Kuwaiti, Bahraini and other interests in plots from Europe to Southeast Asia to the Middle East.

According to U.S. authorities, concern over the threat posed by Hezbollah is well placed. FBI officials testified in February 2002 that “FBI investigations to date continue to indicate that many Hezbollah subjects based in the United States have the capability to attempt terrorist attacks here should this be a desired objective of the group.”⁸ Similarly, CIA Director George Tenet testified in February 2003 that “Hezbollah, as an organization with capability and worldwide presence, is [al-Qaeda’s] equal, if not a far more capable organization.”⁹ To be sure, Hezbollah is highly qualified, and capable of carrying out attacks not only in the U.S.—where it has never carried out operations before—but in Europe as well—where it has been active in the past.

US intelligence officials have also expressed concern over possible links between Hezbollah and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, highlighting the ad hoc tactical relationship brewing between Iran’s shi’a proxy and the loosely affiliated al-Qaeda network. In September 2003, when US authorities designated Zarqawi and several of his associates as ‘Specially Designated Global Terrorist’ entities, the Treasury said that Zarqawi not only had “ties” to Hezbollah, but that plans were in place for his deputies to meet with both Hezbollah and Asbat al-Ansar (a Lebanese Sunni terrorist group), “and any other group that would enable them to smuggle mujaheddin [sic] into Palestine.”¹⁰ To this end, Zarqawi received “more than \$35,000” in mid 2001 “for work in Palestine,” which included “finding a mechanism that would enable more suicide martyrs to enter Israel” as well as “to provide training on explosives, poisons, and remote controlled devices.”¹¹

Similarly, while the 9/11 Commission found no evidence that Iran or Hezbollah had advance knowledge of the September 11 plot, the commission’s report does note that Iran and Hezbollah provided assistance to al-Qaeda on several occasions. For example, al-Qaeda operatives were allowed to travel through Iran with great ease. Entry stamps were not put in Saudi operatives’ passports at the border, though at least eight of the September 11 hijackers transited the country between October 2000 and February 2001. The report also noted a “persistence of contacts between Iranian security officials and senior al-Qaeda figures” and drew attention to an informal agreement by which Iran would support al-Qaeda training with the understanding that such training would be used “for actions carried out primarily against Israel and the United States.” Indeed, al-Qaeda operatives were trained in explosives, security, and intelligence on at least two occasions, with one group trained in Iran around 1992, and a second trained by Hezbollah in Lebanon’s Beka’a Valley in the fall of 1993.¹²

In the final analysis, whether suspected ties between Hezbollah and global jihadist elements such as Zarqawi and the 9/11 plotters are proved or not, Hezbollah warrants being designated a terrorist group of global reach on the merits of its own activities.

On top of its efforts to cripple the peace process, Hezbollah warrants European attention for its operations there. In the 1980s Hezbollah operatives carried out bombings in France and assassinations in Germany, and killed French peacekeeping forces in Beirut. But the group continues to operate out of Europe today. Consider some of Hezbollah’s operations in Europe:

In 1989, Bassam Gharib Makki, a Hezbollah operative and student in Germany, collected intelligence on Israeli, Jewish and American targets in Germany. In 1989 and 1990, authorities apprehended a Hezbollah cell operating in Valencia, Spain. The cell was caught smuggling weapons in a ship from Cyprus so that they could be pre-positioned and cached in Europe. After tracking that shipment, authorities found additional explosives that had already been stashed in Europe. It was determined that the cell had been targeting US and Israeli targets in Europe. In 1997,

⁸“Current and Projected National Security Threats to the United States,” Hearing Before the Select Committee on Intelligence of the United States Senate, February 6, 2002 (see response number 3 to “Questions for the Record” on page 339 of GPO print edition)

⁹“Threats to National Security,” Hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee of the United States Senate, February 12, 2003

¹⁰“Treasury Designates Six Al-Qaeda Terrorists,” US Department of the Treasury press release (JS-757), September 24, 2003. Available online: <http://www.treasury.gov/press/releases/js757.htm>

¹¹“Treasury Designates Six Al-Qaeda Terrorists,” US Department of the Treasury press release (JS-757), September 24, 2003. Available online: <http://www.treasury.gov/press/releases/js757.htm>

¹²*The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States*, available online at <http://www.9-11commission.gov/report/index.htm>

Hezbollah was found to be collecting intelligence on the US Embassy in Nicosia, Cyprus. During the same period, members of a Hezbollah cell in Charlotte, North Carolina, paid indigent Americans to travel to Cyprus at Hezbollah's expense and engage in sham marriages so additional operatives could get visas to come to America.¹³ Throughout the mid- to late-1990s, Hezbollah recruited Palestinian students studying in Russia, and collected intelligence on Israeli, Jewish and American targets there.

Today, German intelligence estimates that 800 Lebanese Hezbollah members live in Germany. The organization publishes a weekly newsletter in Germany, *al-Ahd*, though it scaled back its overt presence there after September 11, fearing a clampdown. An investigation in the summer of 2002 led German authorities to monitor the activities of an organization in Berlin suspected of being tied to Hezbollah and of establishing a "training center."¹⁴

Over the past few years, Hezbollah has used Europe as a launching pad from which to infiltrate operatives into Israel to conduct surveillance and carry out attacks. In 1996 Hussien Makdad left Lebanon for Europe where members of a Hezbollah logistical support network provided him with a stolen British passport which he used to enter Israel on a flight from Switzerland. A few days later Makdad was badly injured in an explosion in his East Jerusalem hotel room where he was assembling a bomb made of RDX explosives. In 1997, Hezbollah operative Stephan Smyrek, a German convert to Islam trained by Hezbollah in Lebanon, left Lebanon for Europe and then flew from Amsterdam to Israel on his own German passport. He was tasked with photographing prospective targets for attacks but was arrested at Israel's Ben Gurion airport. In 2000, Hezbollah dispatched Fawzi Ayub, a Canadian of Lebanese decent, to infiltrate Israel from Europe. He traveled from Lebanon on his own Canadian passport, and then sailed to Israel on a forged American passport he received in Europe. Ayub is described as a hardened Hezbollah operative, and is believed to have been sent to conduct attacks in Israel. And in 2001 Hezbollah operative Gerard Shuman, a dual British-Lebanese citizen, flew from Lebanon to Britain on his Lebanese passport and then on to Israel on his British passport. Arrested in Israel, Shuman is believed to have been sent to conduct surveillance operations.

In some of these cases, the authorities have determined that the operatives entered Israel to conduct operations, while in other cases it remains unclear whether they entered Israel just to collect pre-operational surveillance, assist other operatives already there, or conduct attacks themselves. Significantly, each of these operatives relied on European logistical support networks to carry out their missions. Moreover, each is also believed to have been trained by elements tied directly to Imad Mughniyeh, Hezbollah's chief operations officer.

In at least one case, Hezbollah's European operations and the group's efforts to undermine the peace process intersect. In mid-2003, Israeli forces arrested Ghulam Mahmud Qawqa, a member of an al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades cell tied to Hezbollah, for his role in several al-Aqsa bombings in Jerusalem. According to information discovered after his arrest, Qawqa was in the process of engineering attacks on Israeli interests in Europe and Asia on behalf of Hezbollah. In late 2002, Qawqa tasked a Lebanese woman he knew in Germany to photograph the Israeli embassy in Berlin from multiple angles for a possible attack.¹⁵

The above is just a sampling of Hezbollah activity in Europe. Intelligence experts maintain that Hezbollah operatives are located throughout the European continent, including Belgium, Bosnia, Britain, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and Ukraine.

Perhaps what should concern European officials most is the fact that one of the most significant *modus operandi* that runs through all Hezbollah global activities—financial, logistical and operational—is that at some level all Hezbollah networks are overseen by and are in contact with senior Hezbollah and/or Iranian officials. Moreover, Hezbollah cells are adept multi-taskers, responsible for a variety of logistical, financial and operational duties. They raise funds, recruit new members,

¹³United States v. Mohamad Youssef Hammoud, et al. United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth District.

¹⁴"Germany Bans A Charity Organization Close to Hamas and Will Possibly Ban another Close to Hezbollah," *Asharq al Awsat*, August 6, 2002

¹⁵"Germany Surprised to Learn From Press of Plan to Kill Israeli Envoy," Spiegel Online (Hamburg), 3 January 2003, translated by BBC Worldwide Monitoring, 4 January 2003; "Hezbollah (part 1): Profile of the Lebanese Shiite Terrorist Organization of Global Reach Sponsored by Iran and Supported by Syria," Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies, Israel, June 2003; and author interview with intelligence sources, July 2003

conduct preoperational surveillance, provide logistical support, procure weapons and dual use technologies (for both Hezbollah and Iran), and conduct operations.

Investigators in several countries have concluded independently that security services should avoid looking for cells that are strictly engaged in fundraising, logistical support or terrorist operations. Indeed, cells known only to have raised funds have later been found to have played active roles in terrorist operations, as was the case, for example, in the 1992 and 1994 suicide bombings in Argentina. In the words of one U.S. intelligence official, "Hezbollah cells are always a bit operational."¹⁶ They are always in contact with senior operatives. For example, Hezbollah operatives in Charlotte, North Carolina, responded directly to Sheikh Abbas Haraki, a senior Hezbollah military commander in South Beirut. At the same time, Hezbollah procurement agents in Canada who coordinated with the Charlotte cell worked directly with Haj Hasan Hilu Laqis, Hezbollah's chief procurement officer who operates closely with Iranian intelligence.¹⁷ Similarly, in Southeast Asia, members of the Hezbollah network behind a failed truck-bombing targeting the Israeli embassy in Bangkok in 1994, as well as a series of other terrorist plots in the region throughout the 1990s, were intimately tied to Iranian intelligence agents. Comprised almost entirely of local sunni Muslims, the network was led by Pandu Yudhawitna who was himself recruited by Iranian intelligence officers stationed in Malaysia in the early 1980s.¹⁸

Hezbollah uses charities and front organizations to conceal its fundraising activities worldwide. Take, for example, the al-Aqsa International Foundation, a terrorist front organization banned by the United States, Germany and Great Britain (though not the European Union). While al-Aqsa primarily served as a Hamas front organization, Sheikh Moayad, the head of the the al-Aqsa office in Yemen, was arrested in Germany and extradited to the United States for providing financial support to al-Qaeda. Moayad proudly told an undercover FBI informant that he not only funded Hamas but also raised millions of dollars, recruited operatives, and provided weapons to al-Qaeda. According to one report, one of the foundation's offices in Europe also raised funds for Hezbollah.¹⁹

According to a research report based on declassified Israeli intelligence Hezbollah receives funds not only from Iran but from charities that are radical Islamist organizations and donate to Hezbollah out of ideological affinity, even if they are not themselves run by Hezbollah operatives. "Besides operating a worldwide network of fundraisers, funds are also raised through so-called 'charity funds.' Some of these are extremist Islamic institutions that, while not directly connected to Hezbollah, support it, albeit marginally, in view of their radical Islamic orientation."²⁰ The report cites many such charities worldwide, including four in the Detroit area alone: The Islamic Resistance Support Association, the al-Shaid Fund, the Educational Development Association (EDA) and the Goodwill Charitable Organization (GCO). Also cited are the the al-Shahid Organization in Canada, the Karballah Foundation for Liberation in South Africa, the Lebanese Islamic Association and al-Shahid Social Relief Institution in Germany, and the Lebanese Welfare Committee, The Help Foundation and The Jam'iyat al-Abrar (Association of the Righteous) in Britain.

The United States and Israel have long pressed their European allies to take action against Hezbollah, but France in particular has refused to follow America, Israel, Canada and Australia in banning Hezbollah, ostensibly for fear of upsetting the domestic political balance in Lebanon where members of the group hold seats in Parliament.

The issue of banning Hezbollah in Europe—where the EU is a member of the peace process Quartet—is now back on the table, this time at the request of Palestinian officials. "We know that Hezbollah has been trying to recruit suicide bombers

¹⁶ Author interview with US intelligence official, Washington, DC, July 2003.

¹⁷ United States v. Mohamad Youssef Hammoud, et al. United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth District.

¹⁸ Philippino judicial and intelligence documents, author's personal files, including: People of the Philippines versus Pandu Yudhawinata, Criminal case No 99-2013, Republic of the Philippines, Regional Trial Court, National Capital Judicial Region, Branch 117, Pasay City, November 1999.

¹⁹ USA vs. MOHAMMED ALI HASAN AL-MOAYAD, Affidavit in Support of Arrest Warrant, Eastern District of New York, January 5, 2003; Hizbullah (Part I): Profile of the Lebanese Shiite Terrorist Organization of Global Reach Sponsored by Iran and Supported by Syria," Special Information Bulletin, Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies, (CSS), Israel, June 2003, available online at <http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/bu/hizbullah/hezbollah.htm>.

²⁰ Hizbullah (Part I): Profile of the Lebanese Shiite Terrorist Organization of Global Reach Sponsored by Iran and Supported by Syria," Special Information Bulletin, Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies, (CSS), Israel, June 2003, available online at <http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/bu/hizbullah/hezbollah.htm>.

in the name of al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades to carry out attacks which would sabotage the truce,” stated one Palestinian official. Indeed, just hours after the most recent ceasefire announcement, al-Aqsa members fired on a car near an Israeli settlement in the West Bank and then attacked the army unit sent to investigate the shooting. Another PA official cited intercepted email communications and bank transactions indicating that Hezbollah has increased its payments to terrorists: “Now they are willing to pay \$100,000 for a whole operation whereas in the past they paid \$20,000, then raised it to \$50,000.” Indeed, in a late January meeting in Beirut, even as ceasefire negotiations were well underway, Hassan Nasrallah and Khaled Mishal, the leaders of Hezbollah and Hamas, respectively, declared that resistance against Israel was the only option until “all of Palestine” was liberated. A Palestinian official concluded, “Hizbullah and Iran are not happy with Abbas’s efforts to achieve a cease-fire with Israel and resume negotiations with Israel. That’s why we don’t rule out the possibility that they might try to kill him if he continues with his policy.”²¹

Despite this, Hezbollah remains markedly absent from the European Union’s list of banned terrorist organizations. On May 3, 2002, the EU added eleven organizations and seven individuals to its financial-blocking list of “persons, groups, and entities involved in terrorist acts.” The action was significant because it marked the first time that the EU froze the assets of non-European terrorist groups. But in an effort to maintain a distinction between terrorist groups’ political and charitable activities on the one hand, and their direct terror wings on the other, the EU placed several individual Hezbollah terrorists on its list, but not the organization itself. The decision implied Hezbollah operatives are somehow independent of the group that recruits, trains, and funds them.

At the time, the EU decided not to ban the social-welfare or political wings of Hamas either. But in August 2003 the EU reversed its decision, recognizing the entirety of Hamas as a terrorist organization and banning its political and social wings as well. Despite this history of whitewashing Hezbollah terrorist activity, there are small signs that change may be in the offing. While visiting Israel in February 2000, then-French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin referred to Hezbollah as a terrorist organization. “France condemns Hezbollah’s attacks, and all types of terrorist attacks which may be carried out against soldiers or possibly Israel’s civilian population,” he said.²² Jospin was stoned by Palestinians in Jerusalem and received grief at home for his comments. Reverting to its traditional position, French Foreign Minister Michel Barnier stated in February 2005 that “Hezbollah has a parliamentary and political dimension in Lebanon. They have members of parliament who are participating in parliamentary life. As you know, political life in Lebanon is difficult and fragile.”²³

But both France and Germany have taken recent action against Hezbollah, suggesting the possibility that European officials may seriously consider the Palestinian request to ban Hezbollah, though likely not until after Lebanese elections. In December 13, 2004, after a year-long debate, France’s highest administrative court ordered France-based satellite provider Eutelsat to discontinue all broadcasts of the Hezbollah’s satellite channel, Al-Manar.²⁴ The ban was finally instituted after a guest asserted there were Zionist attempts to spread AIDS among Arabs.²⁵

And in January 2005, a German court upheld a lower court’s deportation order against a Hezbollah representative who had lived in Germany for some 20 years. The Dusseldorf court denied the Hezbollah member a visa saying he “is a member of an organization that supports international terrorism.” In a statement, the court said that “Hezbollah is waging a war with bomb attacks against Israel with ‘inhumane brutality’ against civilians.” The court also ruled that Germany should not be bound by the absence of Hezbollah from the EU terrorism list.²⁶

Now that the PA has joined the chorus of those calling on Europe to take action against Hezbollah, Washington should press the EU collectively, and its constituent members individually, to add Hezbollah to the EU terrorism list. While some Euro-

²¹ Khaled Abu Toameh, “PA worried Hizbullah, Iran may target Abbas,” *The Jerusalem Post*, February 10, 2005

²² Jean-Luc Bardet, “France Ccondemns Lebanese Hezbollah’s ‘Terrorist Attacks’,” *AFP*, February 24, 2000

²³ Interview given by M. Michel Barnier, Minister of Foreign Affairs, to Israel’s “Second Television Channel,” Jerusalem, February 7, 2005

²⁴ “France seeks EU debate after banning Hezbollah-linked TV channel,” *Agence France Presse*, 15 December 2004

²⁵ Roula Khalaf, “French court blocks way for Hizbollah TV: Jewish groups are outraged at ‘anti-Semitism’ but al-Manar claims freedom of speech,” *Financial Times*, 15 December 2004

²⁶ “Lebanese Hezbollah official forced to leave Germany,” *Agence France Presse*, 5 January 2005.

peans point to Hezbollah representation in Parliament and resist banning the group, the fact is that Hezbollah operatives are active throughout Europe and pose a security threat to Jewish, Israeli, American and European targets as well.

Moreover, Israelis and Palestinians agree that the organization represents the single most dangerous threat to the peace process. Hezbollah is the only so-called political party that finances suicide bombings and has an arsenal of 13,000 rockets; its terrorist operations must not be forgiven for its parallel political activities. As a member of the Quartet, and in light of calls throughout Europe for more proactive attention to the peace process, the EU should do everything in its power to ensure that the ceasefire holds. Banning Hezbollah would go a long way toward facilitating Israeli-Palestinian peace.

HAMAS

Hamas front organizations in Europe started to receive increased attention in 2003, in large part due to the fact that in April of that year two British Muslims of South Asian descent from Derby and Hounslow carried out a Hamas suicide bombing in Tel Aviv after being recruited by the global jihadist group al-Muhajiroon in Britain and instructed by Hamas leaders in Syria. The following month, U.S. and British authorities both froze the funds of the al Aqsa International Foundation. But the U.S. alone listed Hamas front organizations such as Britain's Interpal, France's *Commite de Bienfaisance et de Secours aux Palestiniens* (CBSP), Switzerland's *Association de Secours Palestinien*, and Austria's *Palestinian Association*. The fact that groups like Hamas run charities in Europe should not surprise: a 1996 CIA document widely reported on in the press reveals that authorities were aware even then that Hamas fronts like Human Appeal International and Human Relief International were operating offices in London.

At a 1994 Hamas planning meeting in Philadelphia, one participant stressed that the U.S. "is a secure place for the movement" and noted that "Europe also can play the same role."²⁷ To be sure, similar Hamas support networks are indeed active across Europe.

For example, over the course of 2003, authorities in the United States, UK, Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Switzerland took action against the al-Aqsa International Foundation (also referred to as the al Aqsa Fund or the al Aqsa Charitable Foundation), a Hamas front organization operating throughout Europe, South Africa, Pakistan, and Yemen that "raised millions of dollars a year."²⁸ The organization had already been outlawed in Israel in 1997 and declared a terrorist organization there the following year. According to a statement issued by Britain's Treasury Ministry in May 2003, "strong evidence from international law enforcement agencies links al-Aqsa Foundation with terrorist activity."²⁹ A Canadian intelligence report also lists al-Aqsa as a charity providing "fundraising and propaganda activities for Hamas."³⁰ In January 2003, the head of al-Aqsa's Yemen office, Shaykh Mohammad Ali Hassan al-Moayad, was arrested in Germany. According to court documents filed in support of his arrest warrant, Moayad offered an FBI informant a receipt showing that he had transferred \$70,000 to Interpal, the Hamas front in London, as proof of his ability "to get money to the Jihad." Moayad also told FBI informants he had provided \$3.5 million to Hamas and \$20 million to al-Qaeda.³¹ A Palestinian intelligence document dated July 2000 and seized by Israeli authorities two years later included the al Aqsa Charitable Foundation in a list of foreign institutions that support Hamas.³² Documents seized from the offices of Hamas charities in the West Bank revealed significant funding was received from

²⁷ Language Specialist el-Touni, FBI Translation of Saturday session, Session ID: mtgb—19931002—5, Saturday 93—10—02, Washington Field Office, April 24, 2001, p. 3

²⁸ "An Important Step in the Struggle against the Financing of Terrorism from Europe: A German Court Upholds a Government Decision to Outlaw the German Office of the Al-Aqsa Charitable Foundation, Used by Hamas as a Front for Fundraising," Special Information Bulletin, Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (CSS), December 2004, available online at <http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/sib/1—05/german.htm>

²⁹ "Britain Freezes assets of charity with suspected terror links," AFP, May 29, 2003

³⁰ "Terrorist Group Profiler," Canadian Secret Intelligence Service (CSIS), June 2002, Author's personal files; See also Stewart Bell, "Hamas May Have Chemical Weapons: CSIS Report Says Terror Group May be Experimenting," *National Post* (Canada), December 10, 2003

³¹ USA vs. Mohammed Ali Hasan Al-Moayad, Affidavit in Support of Arrest Warrant, Eastern District of New York, January 5, 2003

³² "An Important Step in the Struggle against the Financing of Terrorism from Europe: A German Court Upholds a Government Decision to Outlaw the German Office of the Al-Aqsa Charitable Foundation, Used by Hamas as a Front for Fundraising," Special Information Bulletin, Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (CSS), December 2004, available online at <http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/sib/1—05/german.htm>

the al Aqsa Foundation.³³ While some documents refer to otherwise innocuous donations such as “food packages” and “holiday packages,” many specifically note “The project of assistance to the families of the martyrs, the wounded and those who sustained damage.”³⁴ In one case, a document found at the al-Islah Charitable Society in Bethlehem documented donations for thousands of dollars earmarked for the families of martyrs from the al Aqsa offices in Germany, Holland, South Africa, as well as from Interpal (which also coordinated the donations).³⁵

One of the clearest pieces of evidence tying al Aqsa and its most senior officers to Hamas comes from the 1993 interrogation of Abd al-Hakim Muhammad abd al-Fatah Abd al-Rahman, a Hamas activist from the Palestinian village of Bir Naballah near Jerusalem. Abd al-Rahman revealed that before he left for Germany to pursue his studies, he approached Sheikh Jamil Hamami—a senior Hamas leader in the West Bank—about joining Hamas. Hamami instructed Abd al-Rahman to contact Mahmoud Amru, the head of the al Aqsa Foundation in Germany, who Hamami described as a senior Hamas activist in Aachen, Germany. Abd al-Rahman contacted Amru through the local Islamic Center, and continued to be in touch with him throughout the course of his studies in Germany. Amru served as his contact with other Hamas activists in Germany, provided him with ideological materials, and helped him contact Hamas activists in Jordan.³⁶

The al Aqsa International Foundation, like many European charities tied to Hamas, has operated in close cooperation with Interpal, a designated Hamas front in London. On August 22, 2003, the U.S. Treasury Department added Interpal and Hamas front organizations in Austria, France, Switzerland, and Lebanon to its terrorism list. The other charities were the Commite de Bienfaisance et de Secours aux Palestiniens (CBSP) in France, the Association de Secours Palestinien (ASP) in Switzerland, the Palestinian Association in Austria (PVOE), and the since defunct Sanabil Association for Relief and Development in Lebanon.³⁷ On November 21, 2003, Australia followed suit and listed these same Hamas fronts, along with six Hamas leaders, as terrorist entities and seized their funds.³⁸ The Canadians also cited Interpal (Palestinian’s Relief and Development Fund) and the Comite de Bienfaisance et de Soliarity avec la Palestine, a charity in France, as Hamas fronts.³⁹ Interpal has been linked to a host of Hamas front organizations in the West Bank, Gaza, and Israel, not only through receipts found in Hamas charities, but also via telephone intercepts introduced in the case of Sheikh Raed Salah, an Israeli-Arab leader charged with funneling money to Hamas. Transcripts reveal Salah engaged in conversations with Interpal officials and other Hamas financial supporters throughout Europe.⁴⁰

Despite extensive public evidence of its ties to Hamas, on September 24, 2003, Britain’s Charity Commission for England and Wales gave Interpal a clean bill of health. While the Commission came to the same conclusion after investigating Interpal in 1996, the group has since been widely recognized as one of largest Hamas front organizations operating in the West. For example, already in 1996, authorities determined that the International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO) and

³³ Index of documents seized by IDF forces in Operation Defensive Shield, April 2003, Author’s personal files

³⁴ “An Important Step in the Struggle against the Financing of Terrorism from Europe: A German Court Upholds a Government Decision to Outlaw the German Office of the Al-Aqsa Charitable Foundation, Used by Hamas as a Front for Fundraising,” Special Information Bulletin, Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (CSS), December 2004, available online at http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/sib/1_05/german.htm

³⁵ “An Important Step in the Struggle against the Financing of Terrorism from Europe: A German Court Upholds a Government Decision to Outlaw the German Office of the Al-Aqsa Charitable Foundation, Used by Hamas as a Front for Fundraising,” Special Information Bulletin, Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (CSS), December 2004, available online at http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/sib/1_05/german.htm

³⁶ “An Important Step in the Struggle against the Financing of Terrorism from Europe: A German Court Upholds a Government Decision to Outlaw the German Office of the Al-Aqsa Charitable Foundation, Used by Hamas as a Front for Fundraising,” Special Information Bulletin, Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies (CSS), December 2004, available online at http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/sib/1_05/german.htm

³⁷ “U.S. Designates Five Charities Funding Hamas and Six Senior Hamas Leaders as Terrorist Entities,” Office of Public Affairs, Department of the Treasury, August 22, 2003, <http://www.ustreas.gov/press/releases/js672.htm>

³⁸ “Australia lists six Hamas leaders as terrorists and freezes charity assets,” AP, November 21, 2003

³⁹ “Terrorist Group Profiler,” Canadian Secret Intelligence Service (CSIS), June 2002, Author’s personal files; See also Stewart Bell, “Hamas May Have Chemical Weapons: CSIS Report Says Terror Group May be Experimenting,” *National Post* (Canada), December 10, 2003

⁴⁰ Gideon Maron and Yuval Karni, “The Secret Intercepts of Shaykh Salah,” *Yediot Ahronot* (Hebrew), Weekend Supplement, August 29, 2003

the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY), both humanitarian organizations involved in funding global jihadist groups, were funding Hamas through Interpal. In documents confiscated at the time, recipient Hamas organizations were asked to send thank-you letters directly to the IIRO and WAMY rather than Interpal. Authorities now know the trend continued after the Charity Commission last cleared Interpal of charges linking it to Hamas in 1996. Interpal featured prominently in the index of documents seized by Israeli forces from Hamas charity committees across the West Bank in April 2002. Donations from fronts like Interpal came in droves, usually transferred through local branches of Middle Eastern banks.

It was just a few weeks before the Charity Commission's decision to clear Interpal, on August 22, 2003, that the United States announced its designation of Interpal and several other groups with which it is affiliated as "Specially Designated Global Terrorist."⁴¹ Against this backdrop, and coming on the heels of the European Union's long overdue decision to include Hamas on its list of banned terrorist groups, a decision it finally took on September 6, 2003, the Charity Commission's ruling to unfreeze Interpal's accounts was a particularly unwelcome setback to the international effort to sideline Hamas and resurrect the peace process.

Though the Charity Commission claimed U.S. authorities failed to provide evidence to substantiate their charges, a senior US Treasury Department official testified before the US Congress the day after the Commission's decision that the US provided definitive proof of Interpal's financial ties to Hamas.⁴² Moreover, evidence of Interpal's terror connections comes from a variety of open and classified sources and from several countries, not just the United States.⁴³ Additionally, the Charity Commission's failure to account for the plethora of open source evidence linking Interpal to Hamas was only half the problem. The Commission did not investigate whether Interpal funded Hamas charities or organizations, only whether Interpal was linked to the group's "political or violent militant activities."⁴⁴ The Commission concluded that, "in the absence of any clear evidence showing Interpal had links to Hamas' political or violent military activities" its accounts deserved to be unfrozen.⁴⁵ Though the Commission found that Interpal received funds from The Al Aqsa Foundation in the Netherlands, banned as a Hamas front by several countries—including Britain—it excused the transaction because "the funds received were in respect of humanitarian work already carried out by Interpal and then invoiced to The Al Aqsa Foundation."⁴⁶

Clearly, a major factor that inhibited Commission action against Interpal was the popular and alluring though erroneous theory that one can distinguish between the charitable, political and military "wings" of terrorist groups like Hamas. In fact, Interpal is tied to Hamas political and violent activities. But even were it not, its support for the group's social service infrastructure—which itself supports Hamas terror—should have been reason enough to ban Interpal as a Hamas front. Consider, for example, a Palestinian General Intelligence report entitled "Who Finances Hamas?," written in the late 1990s, which estimated that Hamas' annual income was between \$60–\$70 million. The report estimated that of this total, \$12 million came from Britain.⁴⁷

Hamas operatives in Europe have also played hands-on roles in the groups' terrorist attacks. Mohammed Qassem Sawalha, a Hamas activist and longtime Muslim leader in Britain, was appointed a trustee of the radical Finsbury Park mosque in London in February 2005. The mosque was closed in 2004 because it had come under the influence of Abu Hamza al-Masri, a radical Islamic cleric arrested in Britain and charged of some sixteen offenses, including incitement to murder and pos-

⁴¹"US Designates Five Charities Funding Hamas and Six Senior Hamas Leaders as Terrorists," Office of Public Affairs, U.S. Treasury Department, August 22, 2003, available online at <http://www.treas.gov/press/releases/js672.htm>

⁴²Timothy L. O'Brien, "Charity Said to Have Paid Terrorists Is Under Investigation by the Saudis," *The New York Times*, September 25, 2003

⁴³Matthew Levitt, "Turning A Blind Eye to Hamas in London" *Wall Street Journal Europe*, October 20, 2003

⁴⁴"Palestinians Relief and Development Fund, Registered Charity No. 1040094 (Interpal), Charity Commission for England and Wales, <http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/investigations/inquiryreports/interpal.asp>

⁴⁵"Palestinians Relief and Development Fund, Registered Charity No. 1040094 (Interpal), Charity Commission for England and Wales, <http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/investigations/inquiryreports/interpal.asp>

⁴⁶"Palestinians Relief and Development Fund, Registered Charity No. 1040094 (Interpal), Charity Commission for England and Wales, <http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/investigations/inquiryreports/interpal.asp>

⁴⁷"Interpal, Part I," Special Information Bulletin, Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Center for Special Studies, Israel, December 2004, available online at http://www.intelligence.org.il/eng/sib/12_04/interpal.htm

sessing a document that would be useful to someone plotting terrorism, among other counts. The mosque was shut for a period after al-Masri's arrest, and Sawalha was named one of five trustees to lead the mosque when it was reopened in early 2005.⁴⁸ Sawalha's appointment, however, marked little if any improvement upon al-Masri's leadership given Sawalha's own history of supporting Hamas terrorist operations for well over a decade. An August 2003 indictment against Hamas activists in the United States named Sawalha as a co-conspirator and a Hamas activist who provided assistance to those indicted for racketeering and conspiracy, among other charges.⁴⁹ The indictment, in the case of *United States of America v. Mousa Mohammed Abu Marzook et al.*, states that before Sawalha moved to London in the early 1990s he was "a Hamas leader in the West Bank" and goes on to cite several cases in which Sawalha conspired with others to support Hamas terrorist operations.⁵⁰

For example, while in London Sawalha met and conspired with Mohammad Salah (one of the defendants) and Mohammad Jarad (another co-conspirator) who were passing through London on route to Israel. According to the indictment, Sawalha provided the two men with instructions on "Hamas-related activities they were to carry out while in Israel, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip." The indictment further explains how, in August 1992, Sawalha met with Marzook and Salah to discuss the need to "revitalize Hamas terrorist operations in the West Bank." At that meeting Sawalha suggested specific Hamas members in the West Bank who Salah and Jarad could rely on to help revitalize Hamas's terrorist activities. Less than six months later, in January 1993, Sawalha and Salah met yet again in London. At this meeting Sawalha specifically directed Salah to "provide money to various Hamas members in the West Bank and Gaza Strip."⁵¹

The presence of Hamas operatives in Europe is especially disconcerting given the extent of the financial, logistical and even operational links Hamas maintains to a wide array of international terrorist groups. For example, a Hamas delegation participated in the 1995 Islamic People's Congress in Sudan where they met Osama bin Laden and representatives of Algerian, Pakistani, Tunisian and other groups.⁵² In Pakistan, the leader of a jihadi organization there openly admitted to having "person-to-person contacts" with other groups, adding, "sometimes fighters from Hamas and Hezbollah help us." Asked where contacts with groups like Hamas and Hezbollah are held, the Pakistani answered, "a good place to meet is in Iran." Offering insight into the importance of interpersonal relationships between members of disparate terrorist groups, he added, "We don't involve other organizations. Just individuals."⁵³

In another sign of the group's global reach, in 2002 Romanian intelligence was reportedly investigating seventy-three Hamas supporters there, mostly on university campuses. Hamas operatives in Romania were said to operate there "under the screen of the Islamic and Cultural League in Romania." According to their investigation, Romanian intelligence concluded, "Hamas benefits from the logistics of the Islamic and Cultural League." Romanian intelligence feared Hamas posed a "potential threat" in Romania, "fueled by the possibility of [Hamas] carrying out attacks on Israeli and U.S. interests or objectives worldwide."⁵⁴ Similarly, U.S. officials noted in May 2003 that the Islamic League in Norway sent funds, gold and jewelry it raised to the al Aqsa International Foundation offices in Sweden "to be provided to Hamas."⁵⁵ Unlike many other Hamas fronts whose leaders are publicly circumspect about the final destination of the funds they solicit for Hamas, the Islamic League openly acknowledged such funds were intended to support terrorism. At its

⁴⁸Nick Fielding and Abul Taher, "Hamas link to London mosque," *The Times (London)*, February 13, 2005.

⁴⁹US v Marzook et al. US District Court, Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, Special August 2003 Grand Jury, Second Superseding Indictment unsealed August 2004.

⁵⁰US v Marzook et al. US District Court, Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, Special August 2003 Grand Jury, Second Superseding Indictment unsealed August 2004.

⁵¹US v Marzook et al. US District Court, Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, Special August 2003 Grand Jury, Second Superseding Indictment unsealed August 2004.

⁵²Jessica Stern, *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003), p. 253.

⁵³Jessica Stern, *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill* (New York: Harper Collins, 2003), p. 211.

⁵⁴Radu Tudor, "Terrorism in Romania (II)—The Terrorist Organizations Muslim Brothers and Hamas Have Dozens of Members in This Country," translation by Foreign Broadcast Information Service, Eastern Europe (FBIS/EEU-2002-0212), February 12, 2002. Original article published in *Bucharest Ziua*, February 12, 2002.

⁵⁵"Treasury Designates Al-Aqsa International Foundation as Financier of Terror: Charity Linked to Funding of the Hamas Terrorist Organization," Department of the Treasury, Office of Public Affairs, <http://www.treas.gov/press/releases/js439.htm>

May 2002 annual conference, the League's secretary general called on "all Muslims to provide support and to participate in continuing the suicide operations against Israel."⁵⁶

Finally, there are increasingly disturbing signs that elements within Hamas are seriously considering conducting attacks targeting Western interests. In some cases Hamas operatives are being recruited into al-Qaeda; in at least one case Hamas trained a Palestinian living in Canada to conduct operations in North America. This activity, though focused on North America, must be assumed to parallel Hamas activity in Europe as well.

In its August 2004 affidavit for a warrant to search Ismael Elbarasse's car, the FBI noted that while Hamas does not typically target U.S. interests, a 1993 plot to bomb New York landmarks was carried out by conspirators from several jihadist groups, including Hamas. It also noted that "al Qaeda commanders and officials stationed in western countries, including the United States, have recruited operatives and volunteers to carry out reconnaissance or serve as couriers." The post-9/11 crackdown on al-Qaeda has produced "a renewed emphasis by al Qaeda to find confirmed jihadist supporters in the United States by trying to enlist proven members of other groups such as Hamas to make up for the vacuum on the field level."⁵⁷

In at least one other case, Hamas members themselves plotted potential attacks against Western targets. Jamal Akal, a Palestinian with Canadian citizenship, was charged by Israeli authorities with using the ruse of visiting family in Gaza to be trained by Hamas for operations in Canada and the U.S. According to an Israeli press release, Akal admitted he was trained in explosives production and taught to use an M-16 by recently recruited Hamas operative Ahmed Wahabe.⁵⁸ Wahabe tasked Akal to return home and "gather information (via the media) on a senior Israeli official who was arriving in the U.S. Wahabe instructed him to then monitor the senior Israeli official's movements and attempt to assassinate her in a sniper attack. Wahabe also asked Akal to attack members of the US and Canadian Jewish communities, either by shooting or by bombing their homes and/or cars."⁵⁹ Akal's lawyer, Jamil al-Qhateb, confirmed Akal was approached by Hamas and underwent small arms training in Gaza, but insisted Akal never agreed to conduct attacks in Canada.⁶⁰ According to information released by Israeli authorities, "Wahabe told Akal (inter alia): 'New York is an easy place to find Jews'."⁶¹ In a statement issued by the Israeli Embassy in Ottawa an Israeli official confirmed that Akal was to use his Canadian passport to "carry out terrorist attacks in North America against Israeli and Jewish targets . . . Some of the scenarios for those terrorist attacks were assassinating a high-level Israeli official during his visit to North America, booby-trapping cars that belong to Israeli officials—diplomats—and killing a Jew who would come across Mr. Akal's way."⁶²

Akal was specifically instructed to draw on the support of Hamas sympathizers in Canada to fund his attacks. In typical *dawa* tradition, Akal was told to approach people in the mosques he frequents in Canada and "raise funds, ostensibly for the families of suicide bombers, which he would actually use for purchasing a weapon and financing his expenses in monitoring his prospective targets and in perpetrating attacks."⁶³ In another sign of the link between Hamas political and military leaders, at the time of Akal's arrest he and Wahabe were reportedly awaiting approval from the Hamas political leadership to conduct the attacks under al-Qaeda's name,

⁵⁶"Treasury Designates Al-Aqsa International Foundation as Financier of Terror: Charity Linked to Funding of the Hamas Terrorist Organization," Department of the Treasury, Office of Public Affairs, <http://www.treas.gov/press/releases/js439.htm>

⁵⁷Affidavit in Support of a Search Warrant, In re Search Warrant of 4502 Whistler Court, Annandale, VA and Infiniti QX4, VIN JNRAR07Y6XW060359, United States District Court, Eastern District of Virginia, Alexandria Division, August 20, 2004

⁵⁸"Hamas-Trained Terrorist, Canadian National, Arrested by ISA," Communicated by the Israeli Government Press Office (GPO), December 8, 2003, available online at <http://www.imra.org.il/story.php3?id=19092>

⁵⁹"Hamas-Trained Terrorist, Canadian National, Arrested by ISA," Communicated by the Israeli Government Press Office (GPO), December 8, 2003, available online at <http://www.imra.org.il/story.php3?id=19092>

⁶⁰Stewart Bell, "Arrest 'prevented terror attack': Rebutting Ottawa's skepticism, Israel alleges Akal was bound for New York to kill Jews," *National Post* (Canada), December 9, 2003

⁶¹Stewart Bell, "Arrest 'prevented terror attack': Rebutting Ottawa's skepticism, Israel alleges Akal was bound for New York to kill Jews," *National Post* (Canada), December 9, 2003

⁶²Jeff Sallot, "Canadian is Hamas Assassin, Israel Says," *Globe and Mail* (Canada), December 5, 2003

⁶³"Hamas-Trained Terrorist, Canadian National, Arrested by ISA," Communicated by the Israeli Government Press Office (GPO), December 8, 2003, available online at <http://www.imra.org.il/story.php3?id=19092>

not Hamas, in an effort to evade the potential blowback of conducting such attacks in the West.⁶⁴

CONCLUSION

The foreign funding of subversive domestic organizations linked to designated terrorist groups poses immediate dangers to the national security of the United States and our European allies alike. This much is clear: should Western democracies fail to adapt the culture of our law enforcement and intelligence communities, to enact appropriate laws and procedures, and to commit the necessary resources and resolve, we will find the war on terror that much harder to fight, lasting that much longer in duration, and exacting that much higher and tragic a cost in human life.

Counterterrorism is not about defeating terrorism; it is about constricting the environment in which terrorists operate—making it harder for them to do what they want to do at every level: conducting operations, procuring and transferring false documents, ferrying fugitives from one place to another; financing, raising, and laundering funds. It is about making it more difficult for terrorists to conduct their operational, logistical, and financial activities. Only with greater international coordination will authorities succeed in targeting Hezbollah's international financial support network and constricting the operating environment in which this designated terrorist organization currently thrives.

Mr. BARRETT. Thank you, Mr. Levitt. We really appreciate that.

Mr. Vidino, welcome to the Committee today.

Mr. VIDINO. Thank you.

Mr. BARRETT. We look forward to your testimony.

STATEMENT OF MR. LORENZO VIDINO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, "THE INVESTIGATIVE PROJECT"

Mr. VIDINO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and thank you for the opportunity today to discuss the situation in Europe.

The March 11, 2004, train bombings that killed almost 200 commuters in Madrid shocked most Europeans as the attacks represented the first massive strike by Islamist terrorists on European soil. The bombings nevertheless did not surprise security officials on both sides of the ocean as the intelligence community was well aware that it was just a matter of time before Europe would become a target.

Over the last 10 years, in fact, Europe has seen a troubling escalation of Islamist terrorist and extremist activities on its soil. This disturbing phenomenon is due to a combination of several factors and chiefly to: Lax immigration policies that have allowed known Islamic radicals to settle in Europe, the radicalization of significant segments of the continent's growing Muslim population, and thirdly, the European law enforcement agencies' inability to effectively dismantle terrorist networks due to poor attention to the problem and/or the lack of proper legal tools.

Given this premise, it should come as no surprise that almost every attack carried out or attempted by al-Qaeda before and after 9/11 has some link to Europe, and, as we all know, the effects of 9/11 themselves were partially planned between Germany and Spain. Investigations in these cases reveal that different cells operating throughout Europe were involved in the planning. The European-based Islamists also play an essential role in raising or laundering money, supplying false documents and weapons, and re-

⁶⁴ "Hamas-Trained Terrorist, Canadian National, Arrested by ISA," Communicated by the Israeli Government Press Office (GPO), December 8, 2003, available online at <http://www.imra.org.il/story.php?id=19092>

cruiting new operatives for the global Islamist network. It is therefore not farfetched to speak of Europe as a new Afghanistan, a place that al-Qaeda and others have chosen as headquarters for their operations.

The foundations for this security disaster were laid in the 1980s when many European countries either granted political asylum or allowed entrance to hundreds of Islamic fundamentalists, many of them veterans of the war in Afghanistan against the Soviets.

Europeans mistakenly thought that once in Europe these committed radicals would have stopped their violent activities. To the contrary, as soon as they settled on European soil most Islamic radicals exploited the continent's freedoms and continued their efforts to overthrow Middle Eastern governments, and it was in Europe that Islamic radicals from different countries forged strategic alliances. Originally intending only to fight the secular regimes of their own countries, top members of various terrorist groups joined forces in European radicals' mosques where bin Laden's vision of a global jihad came to life. Moreover, the mosques and networks established by radicals who had been given asylum played a crucial role in what can be considered Europe's biggest social and security problem, the radicalization of its growing Muslim population.

Europe is facing a monumental problem in trying to integrate the children and grandchildren of Muslim immigrants who have come to the continent since the 1960s. For many of them, radical Islam has become a vehicle of protest against their problems of unemployment and discrimination. While Europe needs to face its social problems, it also needs to address the inefficiencies of its legal systems in effectively fighting Islamic terrorism. The excellent work done by European intelligence and law enforcement agencies has often been squandered by the courts, first to enforce laws with the insufficiently banished individuals who associated themselves for terrorist purposes or imposed extremely elevated evidentiary requirements. Germany's inability to convict Mzoudi and Motassadeq, the two Moroccans who provided support to some of the 9/11 hijackers, is just the most known example of a series of failures to convict terrorists or terrorism sympathizers throughout Europe.

The high threshold that has to be met in order to make an arrest or even monitor a known fundamentalist has recently created painful consequences. Some of the perpetrators of the Madrid train bombings had been known to Spanish intelligence as radical Islamists since 1999. Some of them had had their phone conversations intercepted and their apartments searched, but no charge could be brought against them since they had committed no crime. Similarly, Mohammed Bouyeri had been monitored by Dutch intelligence for more than a year before he assassinated Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh in November 2004. Even though he had posted death threats against members of the Dutch Elite on the Internet and was associated with known terrorists, Dutch authorities had no legal power to detain him. Hundreds of Islamist terrorists carry European passports either by birth or through naturalization and can therefore enter the United States without a visa. It is not a coincidence that the three men, who have been charged just 2 weeks ago for their role in a plot to attack various financial

institutions in the United States, were all British citizens from al-Qaeda, dispatched on several surveillance missions to the States, counting on the fact that their British passports would have made their entrance into the United States easier.

As the effects of 9/11 have painfully shown, events that occur overseas can have a direct impact on the security of this country and its interests abroad. It is therefore crucial for the United States to follow carefully the events taking place in Europe and to closely cooperate with European counterparts.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Vidino follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. LORENZO VIDINO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, "THE INVESTIGATIVE PROJECT"

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Vice-Chairman, and thank you for the opportunity today to discuss the threat posed to Europe by Islamist extremism.

The deadly train bombings that killed almost 200 commuters in Madrid on March 11, 2004, shocked most Europeans, as the attacks represented the first massive strike by Islamist terrorists on European soil. The Madrid bombings, nevertheless, did not surprise security officials on both sides of the ocean, as the intelligence community was well aware that it was just a matter of time before Europe, one of the terrorists' favorite bases of operations, could become a target.

Over the last ten years, in fact, Europe has seen a troubling escalation of Islamist terrorist and extremist activities on its soil. This disturbing phenomenon is due to a combination of several factors and chiefly to:

- lax immigration policies that have allowed known Islamic radicals to settle and remain in Europe,
- the radicalization of significant segments of the continent's burgeoning Muslim population, and
- the European law enforcement agencies' inability to effectively dismantle terrorist networks, due to poor attention to the problem and/or the lack of proper legal tools.

Given these premises, it should come as no surprise that almost every single attack carried out or attempted by al Qaeda throughout the world has some link to Europe, even prior to 9/11. A Dublin-based charity provided material support to some of the terrorists who attacked the US Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998. Part of the planning for the thwarted Millennium bombing that was supposed to target the Los Angeles International Airport was conceived in London. False documents provided by a cell operating between Belgium and France allowed two al Qaeda operatives to portray themselves as journalists and assassinate Ahmed Shah Massoud, the commander of the Afghan Northern Alliance, just two days before 9/11. And, as we well know, the attacks of 9/11 were partially planned in Hamburg, Germany, where three of the four pilots of the hijacked planes had lived and met, and from where they received extensive financial and logistical support until the day of the attacks.

After 9/11, as the al Qaeda network became less dependent on its leadership in Afghanistan and more decentralized, the cells operating in Europe gained even additional importance. Most of the planning for the April 2002 bombing of a synagogue in the Tunisian resort town of Djerba that killed 21 mostly European tourists was done in Germany and France. According to Moroccan authorities, the funds for the May 2003 Casablanca bombings came from Moroccan cells operating between Spain, France, Italy and Belgium. And cells operating in Europe have also directly targeted the Old Continent. Only after 9/11, attacks have been either planned or executed in Madrid, Paris, London (in at least 4 different circumstances), Milan, Berlin, Porto and Amsterdam.

However, while investigations in all these cases revealed that different cells operating throughout Europe were involved in the planning of the operation, the role of these cells extends beyond the simple planning or execution of attacks. European-based Islamists raise or launder money, supply false documents and weapons and recruit new operatives for a global network that spans from the United States to the Far East. Within the last decade, their role has become essential to the mechanics of the network. It is, therefore, not far-fetched to speak of Europe as "a new Af-

ghanistan,” a place that al Qaeda and others have chosen as its headquarters to direct operations.

Origins and developments of Islamist terrorism in Europe

The foundations for this security disaster were laid in the 1980's, when many European countries either granted political asylum or allowed the entrance to hundreds of Islamic fundamentalists, many of them veterans of the war in Afghanistan against the Soviets facing persecution in their home countries. Moved by humanitarian reasons, for decades countries like Britain, Sweden, Holland and Germany have made it their official policy to welcome political refugees from all over the world. But blinded by their laudable intentions of providing protection to all individuals suffering political persecutions from autocratic regimes throughout the world, most European countries never really distinguished between opponents of dictatorships who wanted to spread democracy and Islamic fundamentalists who had bloodied their hands in their home countries with heinous terrorist acts. As a consequence, some of the world's most radical Islamists facing prosecutions in the Middle East found not only a safe haven but also a new convenient base of operation in Europe.

Many European governments thought that, once in Europe, these committed Islamists would have stopped their violent activities. Europeans also naively thought that, by giving the mujaheddin asylum, they would have been spared their murderous wrath. All these assumptions turned out to be completely wrong. In fact, as soon as they settled on European soil, most Islamic radicals exploited the continent's freedom and wealth to continue their efforts to overthrow Middle Eastern governments, raising money and providing weapons and false documents for their groups operating in their countries of origin.

And it was in Europe that Islamic radicals from different countries converged and forged strategic alliances. Originally intending only to fight the secular regimes of their own countries, top members of various Islamist terrorists groups, drawn to the radical mosques of Europe, joined forces with their colleagues who all adhered to the same Salafi/Wahhabi ideology and shared the common dream of a global Islamic state. It was between London and Milan, for example, that the strategic alliance between Algerian and Tunisian terrorist groups was conceived. Europe, along with al Qaeda's Afghan training camps, was the place where Bin Laden's project of "global jihad" came to realization, as various Islamist groups progressively abandoned their local goals and embraced al Qaeda's strategy of attacking America and its allies worldwide.

Moreover, the mosques and networks established by radicals who had been given asylum played a crucial role in what could be considered Europe's biggest social and security problem, the radicalization of its growing Muslim population. Europe is facing monumental problems in trying to integrate the children and grandchildren of Muslim immigrants who have come to the continent since the 1960s. Dangerously high percentages of second- and third-generation Muslim immigrants live at the margins of European societies, stuck between unemployment and crime. While they hold French, Dutch or British passports, they do not have any attachment to their native land, feeling like foreigners in their home countries.

"After things didn't work out with work, I decided to devote myself to the Koran," explained an Islamic fundamentalist interviewed by the German magazine *Der Spiegel*. As they perceive themselves with no economic future, trapped in a country that does not accept them and without a real identity, many young European Muslims turn to their fathers' religion in their quest for direction. While some of them find solace in their rediscovered faith, others adopt the most belligerent interpretation of Islam, embarking on a holy war against their own country. According to a French intelligence report, radical Islam represents for some French Muslims "a vehicle of protest against . . . problems of access to employment and housing, discrimination of various sorts, the very negative image of Islam in public opinion."

Whether this troubling situation is due to the European societies' reluctance to fully accept newcomers or on some Muslims' refusal to adapt to new customs is hard to say. Nevertheless, given the burgeoning numbers of Muslim immigrants living in Europe, currently estimated between 15 and 20 million, the social repercussions of these sentiments are potentially explosive.

While it is true that the situation in the immigrant suburbs of many European cities is dramatic and that it is difficult for the children of Muslim immigrants to emerge in mainstream European society, the popular paradigm that equates militancy with poverty is simplistic and refuted by the facts. An overview of the European-born Muslim extremists that have been involved with terrorism, in fact, shows that many of them came from backgrounds of intact families, with financial stability and complete immersion in mainstream European society. The example of Omar

Sheikh—the British-born son of a wealthy Pakistani merchant who attended some of England's most prestigious private schools, led a Pakistani terrorist group and was jailed for his role in the beheading of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl—shows that the causes of radicalization are deeper for many individuals.

Nevertheless, it is undeniable that young, disaffected Muslims living at the margins of European societies are the ideal recruits for terrorist organizations. The recruitment takes place everywhere, from mosques to cafes in Arab neighborhoods of European cities to the internet. As in the US, European prisons are considered a particularly fertile breeding ground for radicalism, a place where young men already prone to violence can be easily turned into terrorists. In France, for example, where unofficial estimates indicate that more than 60% of the inmates are Muslims (while Muslims represent only 10% of the total French population), authorities closely monitor the activities of Islamic fundamentalists, aware of the dangers of the radicalization of their jail population. Officials, who estimate that 300 militants are active in the Paris prisons alone, have seen cases of radicals who seek to get arrested on purpose so that they can recruit new militants in jail.

Similarly, in Spain, where one in ten inmates is of Moroccan or Algerian descent, Islamic radicals have been actively recruiting in jail for the last ten years. In October of 2004, Spanish authorities dismantled a cell that had been planning a bloody sequel to the March 11 Madrid bombings, intending to attack the Audiencia Nacional, Spain's national criminal court. Most of the men, who called themselves "*The Martyrs of Morocco*", had been recruited in jail, where they had been detained for credit card fraud and other common crimes and had no prior involvement with Islamic fundamentalism.

Current trends of terrorism financing in Europe

If the European criminal underworld provides an excellent recruiting pool, crime also constitutes a major source of financing for terrorist organizations. Islamic terrorist groups operating in Europe have resorted to all kinds of crimes to finance their operations, including robberies, document forging, fraud and the sale of counterfeit goods. But more alarming is the fact that Islamist groups have built strong operational alliances with criminal networks operating in Europe.

Over the last few years, Islamic terrorists have been actively involved in one of Europe's most profitable illegal activities, human smuggling. The GSPC, a radical Algerian Islamist group operating in the desert areas of North Africa, is actively involved in smuggling large groups of Sub-Saharan migrants across the desert and then to Europe, where the group can count on an extensive network of cells that provides the illegal immigrants with false documents and safe houses. In 2003, German authorities dismantled a network of Kurdish militants linked to Ansar al Islam, the terrorist group led by Abu Musab al Zarqawi that is battling US forces in Iraq. The Kurdish cells had organized a sophisticated and profitable scheme to smuggle hundreds of illegal Kurdish immigrants into Europe, raising hundreds of thousands of dollars. Considering that, on average, a migrant pays about \$4,000 to his smugglers and that around 500,000 illegal immigrants reach Europe every year, terrorist groups have all the reasons to get involved in the human smuggling business.

Likewise, the terrorists' use of drug trafficking is also considered a particularly serious problem by European authorities, which believe that terrorist organizations have infiltrated around two thirds of the \$12.5 billion-a-year Moroccan hashish trade. Evidence from recent terrorist operations reveals that profits from drug sales have directly financed terrorist attacks. According to Spanish authorities, Jamal Ahmidan, a known drug dealer and one of the operational masterminds of the Madrid train bombings, obtained the 220 pounds of dynamite that were used in the attacks in exchange for 66 pounds of hashish. And Ahmidan also flew to the island of Mallorca shortly before March 11 to arrange the sale of hashish and ecstasy, planning to use the profits for additional attacks. The scheme is not new to Moroccan groups, which have used profits from the drug sales to finance the thwarted attacks against American ships in Gibraltar in 2002 and the Casablanca bombings.

European authorities are confronting criminal activities with relative success, but are facing an uphill battle when they have to prove the links to terrorism. Severe evidentiary requirements and the secretive nature of terrorism financing have prevented Europeans from effectively tackling known networks that financed terrorist activities. The most commonly used legal tool, the designation as a "terrorism financier", has had only modest results. In fact, since the various terrorism financing resolutions allow authorities only to freeze the bank accounts of suspected terrorism financiers, businesses, residential and commercial properties belonging to the designated individual cannot be touched.

The case of Youssuf Nada and Ahmed Idris Nasreddine is illustrative. Nada and Nasreddine operated a bank, Bank Al Taqwa, and a network of companies between Italy, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and the Bahamas. The US Treasury Department, which designated Al Taqwa and both men as terrorism financiers in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, claims that, since its foundation in 1988, Al Taqwa financed groups such as the Palestinian Hamas and the Algerian GIA. Moreover, according to the Treasury Department, Al Taqwa provided funding to al Qaeda until September of 2001 and granted a clandestine line of credit to “a close associate of Usama Bin Laden.” European authorities have also designated the bank and the two financiers, but with scant results. Both men, financial experts with decades of experience, have devised a system of front companies, figureheads and secret bank accounts in off-shore banking paradises that allowed them to circumvent resolutions and shelter their finances from the authorities’ action. And while Nada still maintains business interests in Switzerland and Liechtenstein, Nasreddine still owns a luxurious hotel in downtown Milan.

Legal obstacles

The problems faced by European authorities in tackling terrorism financing are the same that prevent them from successfully prosecuting and dismantling terrorist networks operating on the continent. In many European countries, laws prevent intelligence agencies from sharing information with prosecutors or law enforcement agencies unless they follow a lengthy and complicated procedure. With few exceptions, the monitoring of individuals has to be authorized by a judge based on extremely strong evidence of the suspect’s guilt presented to secure the order. Severe evidentiary requirements often prevent prosecutors from using information obtained by intelligence agencies in their cases. And prosecutors also have to prove the specific intent of an accomplice in a terrorist act, showing that he knowingly provided support to the person who carried out a terrorist attack.

These provisions are the product of centuries of democratic legal tradition and are meant to defend the citizen from the creation of a police state. They epitomize Europe’s success in creating a civil society where the government cannot unduly interfere with its citizens’ lives. But, at the same time, they create an ideal shelter for the terrorists. European laws need to be adapted to the new threat that it is facing.

“There has to be a balance between individual liberty on one hand and the efficiency of the system to protect the public on the other. In an ideal world, I would choose the first, but this is not an ideal world, and when dealing with Islamic extremists we have to be brutal sometimes,” is the view of Alain Marsaud, a member of the French Parliament and an anti-terrorism magistrate. Marsaud’s views represent France’s attitude towards terrorism, as the French legal system provides investigators and anti-terrorism magistrates with powers that have no equal in Europe and in the United States as well.

But France is an isolated case. The aftermath of 9/11 showed that most European legal systems are not prepared to efficiently face the new legal issues that have arisen with the war on Islamic terrorism. The excellent work done by European intelligence agencies and law enforcement has often been thwarted by the courts, which are forced to enforce laws that do not adequately punish individuals that associate themselves for terrorist purposes. The German trials of Abdelghani Mzoudi and Mounir El Motassadeq, two of the accomplices of Mohammed Atta and the other hijackers in Hamburg, revealed how Europe often finds itself legally impotent against terrorism.

Mzoudi and Motassadeq, the only two men to go on trial in Europe in connection with the 9/11 attacks, have been engaged in a complicated legal battle against German authorities for more than three years. According to prosecutors, Mzoudi’s Hamburg apartment served as the meeting place for a group of Islamic radicals who, bound by a common hatred for the United States and Jews, planned an attack that would shock the world. After countless meetings at Mzoudi’s apartment, some members of the Hamburg cell went to the United States to attend flight schools and carry out the lethal 9/11 plan; others remained in Hamburg providing logistical help and wiring them money. Prosecutors assert that while the men who worked from Germany may not have known every detail of the plot, they were well-aware of the fatal intentions of their U.S.-based cohorts. For instance, Mounir Motassadeq allegedly told a friend, “[The 9/11 hijackers] want to do something big. The Jews will burn and we will dance on their graves.”

Motassadeq and Mzoudi were charged in Hamburg with being accessories to the murder of more than 3,000 people and being members of a terrorist organization. Motassadeq was initially found guilty and sentenced to 15 years. Mzoudi’s trial was more complicated, as, by the time it began, Ramzi Binalshibh, one of the key members of the Hamburg cell, had been arrested in Pakistan. Mzoudi’s lawyers de-

manded that they could examine Binalshibh, whose testimony they alleged was essential to uncover Mzoudi's real role. Since the US government, which has detained Binalshibh since his arrest, refused to even disclose Binalshibh's location, German judges reluctantly acquitted Mzoudi. *"Mr. Mzoudi, you are acquitted, but this is no reason to celebrate,"* said the presiding judge, adding that the court was not convinced he was innocent and that he had been acquitted only because the prosecution had failed to prove its case. A month after Mzoudi's acquittal, an appeal court ordered a retrial for Motassadeq, claiming that he had been denied a fair trial because the US had refused to allow the testimony of Binalshibh.

The difficulty faced by German prosecutors in the case of both Mzoudi and Motassadeq lies in the fact that the two were facilitators, sending money and providing apartments to terrorists but not actually carrying out terrorist acts themselves. Indeed, the lawyers for both men have argued that their clients believed they were simply helping fellow Muslims. When asked why he wired money to 9/11 pilot Marwan al-Shehhi, Motassadeq explained: *"I'm a nice person, that's the way I am."*

Great Britain, America's closest ally in Afghanistan and Iraq, has similarly tied its own hands. Radical imams openly preach hatred for the West and incite worshippers in the mosques of London to carry out attacks inside England. And recruiters have operated freely in Britain for more than a decade, as the story of Hassan Butt proves. With British forces still battling the Taliban in Afghanistan, the British public was shocked to read in the tabloids the interview with Hassan Butt, a British-born Muslim who bragged: *"I have helped to bring in at least 600 young British men. These men are here to engage in jihad against America and its allies . . . That there are so many should serve as a warning to the British government. All of them are prepared to die for the cause of Islam."* Despite his activities and his not-so-veiled threats to the British government, Butt was allowed to return to England undisturbed.

Upon his return to England, Butt was contacted by a reporter from *The Mirror* and agreed to be interviewed for the price of 100,000 Pounds. When *The Mirror's* reporter informed British counter-terrorism officials of the meeting and asked them if they wanted to interview Butt themselves, their response was shocking: *"I know this sounds ridiculous,"* said a detective from the Anti-Terrorist Squad, *"But we can't get involved. All our checks, all our intelligence, show that he is not wanted for any offences in the UK."* Since recruiting for a foreign terrorist organization operating overseas was not a crime in Britain, Butt could not be charged with any crime.

Another example of this frustrating situation and of its dangerous consequences is represented by the results of a 2003 Dutch intelligence investigation on a group of 40/50 young North African radicals. Dutch intelligence had collected important information on the men, revealing their ties to some of the masterminds of the May 2003 Casablanca bombings and other terrorists throughout Europe. Moreover, some of the men had expressed their desire to die as martyrs and to kill prominent members of the Netherlands' political and cultural establishment. In the fall of 2003, some of the men were arrested. Nevertheless, the men had committed no crime and the Dutch legal system forbade the use of information obtained by intelligence agencies in a trial. As a consequence, the men had to be released.

Predictably, after a few months, the group decided to go into action. Last November, one of its members, Mohammed Bouyeri, who had been under surveillance for months, gunned down and tried to ritualistically behead in the middle of one of Amsterdam's busiest streets Theo van Gogh, a popular Dutch filmmaker who, according to Islamists, had dared to offend Islam with a controversial movie about the treatment of Muslim women.

A similar situation occurred in Spain, as some of the key planners and perpetrators of the Madrid train bombings had been known to Spanish intelligence as radical Islamists with ties to terrorism since 1999. Some of them had had their phone conversations intercepted and their apartments searched, but no charge could be brought against them since, technically, they had committed no crime.

Unfortunately, the results in the cases in Britain, Holland and Spain are not the exception, but the rule. The legal systems of most European countries do not have provisions that provide authorities with preemptive measures that can be taken against a known fundamentalist who is overheard saying he wants to "die as a martyr," unless evidence of a specific plan is also uncovered. Moreover, the laws of few European countries adequately punish activities that, while not directly harming people, are instrumental and necessary to the execution of a terrorist attack. Enabling a terrorist to enter the country by supplying him with a false document is equally important as providing him with the explosives, but few countries punish the two crimes with the same severity.

The Iraqi conflict and other repercussions for the United States

Before 9/11, recruiting individuals for a terrorist organization, as long as the group operated outside of the country, was not a crime in most European countries. While some countries have recently changed their laws to allow prosecution, the phenomenon of recruitment in Europe is taking place with even greater intensity than it did prior to 9/11, and its consequences are dire for both Europe and the United States. Shielded by the fact that recruitment for a terrorist organization is difficult to prosecute, and exploiting the widespread opposition to the Iraqi war within Muslim communities in Europe, recruiters have been sending hundreds of European Muslims to Iraq, joining the ranks of the insurgency that is fighting US and Iraqi forces on the ground.

In 2003, an investigation launched by Italian authorities dismantled a network that recruited more than 200 young Muslims in Germany, France, Sweden, Holland and Italy to train and fight with Ansar al Islam, the al Qaeda-linked group led by Abu Musab al Zarqawi that has carried out dozens of attacks against American and Iraqi civilian targets. Reportedly, five young Muslims recruited in Milan have died in suicide operations in Iraq, including the attack against the Baghdad hotel where US deputy secretary of defense Paul Wolfowitz was staying. The investigation revealed that the network that had sent the volunteers to Iraq was the same that had recruited hundreds of militants before 9/11 for the al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan, showing the continuity and adaptability of terrorist networks that have been operating in Europe for more than a decade.

The Iraqi war is also presenting evidence of a different phenomenon, the involvement of extremely young European Muslims who do not belong to any organized network or terror group, but who, nevertheless, feel the sudden urge of fighting "the infidels." While the Italians dismantled a very sophisticated network that had close links to Zarqawi and al Qaeda's leadership, investigators throughout Europe have noticed that many of the volunteers who leave for Iraq are groups of teenagers, high-school students and petty criminals from the continent's poor immigrant neighborhoods with no connections to a terrorist group, who seemingly decide to act on their own.

This phenomenon is the direct consequence of the social crisis that is affecting Europe, as local governments are struggling to integrate the continent's soaring Muslim population. And while it is true that only a minority of the millions of Muslims living in Europe espouse radical views or support violent activities, the dangerous consequences of the actions of this minority cannot be overstated. Every act of violence or foiled terrorist plot increases the rift between Muslims and the native European population. The brutal killing of Van Gogh, for example, brought turmoil to the Netherlands, traditionally one of Europe's most tolerant and peaceful societies. Mosques and Islamic schools were firebombed in the wake of the filmmaker's assassination and a poll conducted after the attacks revealed that 40% of Dutch hoped that Muslims "no longer felt at home" in Holland. In retaliation, groups of Dutch Muslims attacked churches, igniting a spiral of hatred.

The spread of Islamic radicalism and terrorism in Europe needs to be closely monitored by the United States and not only for the historical and cultural links between the US to Europe. Hundreds of Islamist terrorists have, either by birth or through naturalization, European passports and can, therefore, enter the United States without a visa and with just a summary scrutiny once they attempt to enter the US borders. It is not a coincidence, for example, that the three men who have been charged just two weeks ago for their role in a plot to attack various financial institutions in the United States were all British citizens whom al Qaeda had dispatched on several surveillance missions to the States, counting on the fact that their British passports would have made their entrance into the US easier.

As the attacks of 9/11 have painfully shown, events that occur overseas can have a direct impact on the security of this country and its interests abroad. It is therefore crucial for the United States to follow carefully the events taking place in Europe and to closely cooperate with its European counterparts, as only a global effort can defeat this global enemy.

Mr. BARRETT. Thank you, Mr. Vidino.

Mr. Moniquet? Is that right?

Mr. MONIQUET. Yes.

Mr. BARRETT. I am from South Carolina. I did pretty good on that one. Welcome to the Committee today. Thank you for being here. We are looking forward to your testimony.

STATEMENT OF MR. CLAUDE MONIQUET, PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR GENERAL, EUROPEAN STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY CENTER

Mr. MONIQUET. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the Members of the Committee for giving me the opportunity today to testify in the center of the American democracy and to give a view on the problems of Islamic extremism and terrorism and the threat they represent for Europe and the United States. I ask also your patience because English, as you are aware, it is not my native language. I promise to do my best to make it understandable.

When I read some newspapers or analysis, even of European origin, I frequently see Europe as a continent where Islamists occupy the streets and advocate radical Islam's tribunals, jihads, and so on. Another common view, especially in Europe, is that we have no problems with the Muslim community; that integration is quite a success, extremists are a very small minority, and the jihad is a kind of primatour opposing Mr. bin Laden to Mr. George W. Bush. In this second view, it will be sufficient to keep a distance with the United States and their policy to avoid terrorist attacks on European soil. However, those two extreme positions are equally wrong, and the reality is somewhere in between.

First of all, it is true that at the moment the large majority of the European Muslims are quiet and different people, just willing to lead a very normal life and hoping to build the best future for their children. Many of those people come from non-democratic countries and know perfectly well that they enjoy not only Europe prosperity, but also democratic and civil rights they could never enjoy in their country of origin or in the countries of their parents. But a strong minority has a very different meaning and a very different agenda. They think that they must oppose democracy. They rally around radical preachers, they press extremist views of Islam, and some of them choose to fight the so-called Western enemy by arms and by bombs.

Nobody could say exactly how many of those extremists live in Europe, but given a statistical formula used by one of the French intelligence services—if necessary, I could explain you the formula later—we can take an average Muslim population and we will find about 5 percent fundamentalists. Of those 5 percent, 3 percent will be dangerous people. That means for a Muslim population of, on average, 12 million people in Europe, we will find 600,000 fundamentalists and about 18,000 people that must be counted as dangerous.

The causes of why Islamist extremists are in Europe are many and various. The first, of course, is a lack of integration. Racism and exclusion sadly existed, and still exist, in many European countries. So Muslims from the so-called second generation and from the third generation feel excluded from the society in which they live.

Some "lifestyles"—for instance polygamy or the birth rate—reinforce the rejection of the Muslim community by the European society. The economic and social crisis is another issue. This crisis hit the Muslim community very hard. The average unemployment in France or Belgium, for instance, is around 10 percent. It is com-

monly 20 percent within the Muslim communities and even 40 percent among the Muslim youth, the famous third generation. This, of course, reinforces the feeling of exclusion.

The third point, another cause of this emergence of Islamic extremism in Europe, will be the so-called “vicarious humiliation.” Democracy, globalization and a communication culture give people in Europe direct access to information. Events in Bosnia, Somalia, Chechnya, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict or Iraq lead some young Muslims to create what the French sociologist, Farid Khosrokhovar, called “an identity of vicarious humiliation.” Feeling excluded in the country they are living in, they develop a kind of empathy with all the Muslim victims in the world. They convince themselves that their own exclusion and the persecution of their brothers have the same roots; the rejection of Islam by the Western world.

Last, but not least of course, the influence of the extremist clerics. Most Muslim clerics, even those who are not radicals, come from abroad and are frequently trained in Saudi Arabia or by Saudi clerics. They have no real knowledge of the society in which their followers live and often, as shown by an investigation in France or in the Netherlands, they do not even speak the local language so they cannot take a role in easing the tension or helping integration.

Is the threat real? Yes, I think so, and the threat is both political and terrorist. On the political level Islamists are trying to subvert Western society by contesting humanists values such as sexual equality, freedom of religion, freedom of speech and so on. On the terrorist level the Islamists organize logistical and operational cells. Since September 11, around 20 major terrorist attacks have been averted in Europe, but two were successful—the Madrid bombing of March 11, 2004, of course, and the murder of the Dutch filmmaker, Theo van Gogh, on November 2, 2004. The last one we saw a qualitative revolution in the threats. Most of the Islamist terrorists in Europe were of the age between 25 and 40 in the past. We could see no very young people between 18 and 20 years engaged in terrorist activities, for instance, in Iraq. What we are awaiting is the emergence of the new generation of terrorists in Europe, kids who are 12 to 15 years old on September 11th, grow up in the middle of jihads and see Osama bin Laden as a model.

The threat against the interest of the United States from European terrorists is, of course, very real. American intelligence in Europe—Embassies, consulates, military personnel, hotels, American companies—are natural targets for the Islamist terrorists, but very small. Most of the second generation people and almost all of the third generation now hold European passports so those people can travel freely to the United States and anywhere as they want to. I do not need to remind you that the September 11 attacks were planned in Germany, Great Britain and Spain and I do not need to remind you of the case of Richard Reid, the so-called Shoe Bomber.

Given the current situation, that I have tried to describe to you, it is hard to be optimistic. The threats both against Europe and from Europe to the United States will remain at a very high level in the foreseeable future. I am afraid that a tragedy will be nec-

essary to force the European authorities to face reality and to really address the problem posed by Islamists. The question in my view is no more and no longer if the tragedy will happen, but when it will happen.

I thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Moniquet follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MR. CLAUDE MONIQUET, PRESIDENT AND DIRECTOR
GENERAL, EUROPEAN STRATEGIC INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY CENTER

1) *An overview of the problem*

For various reasons, it is quite difficult to draw a general view of Islamic extremism in Europe. This question has not yet been really addressed by academics, and we lack scientific data. Even the real number of Muslims living in Europe is open to question. For instance in France, various figures are circulating: 4 million, 5 million, 6 million or more. But we could reasonably say that, without any doubt, the problem is real. Some concrete signs underline this reality:

- Before 2000, it was extremely rare to see a public demonstration by Islamists in the streets of Europe. Since September 11, we have seen this kind of street demonstration in countries like France and Belgium. Thousands of people took part in those demonstrations, for instance one at the beginning of 2004 in Paris, to protest the law banning the Islamic veil from public schools;
- Ten years ago, the Islamic veil was mainly worn by older women. Now at least half of the female Muslim population wear the veil. In some municipalities in France, the figure is about 80%. From field investigation we know that in most cases those girls and women didn't really choose to wear the veil but were "forced" to do so by family or community pressure. In some European cities, a Muslim girl who refuses to wear the veil leaves herself open to insults, physical aggression, sexual harassment and even collective rape. In France, those aggressions happen regularly;
- Before the end of the nineties, Islamist political parties didn't exist in Europe. Now you can find them in France or Belgium. Of course, they're still small parties, with no representation in Parliament. But, to take the case of Belgium, in May 2003 the "*Parti de la Citoyenneté et Prospérité*" (PCP, "Party of Citizenship and Prosperity") which advocates a radical Islam, won more than 8 000 votes in Brussels. If we reckon that approximately 200 000 Muslims live in Brussels, that means that approximately 4% of those people gave their vote to the PCP. Now, if we consider only old enough to vote, the figure is more than 4%. Last but not least, if we consider that most of the votes were registered in the same municipality, where approximately 50 000 Muslims live, that means that between 10 and 16% of those people gave their vote to a party advocating radical Islam;
- Police and intelligence services know that fundamentalist and hate preaching are common in many mosques;
- Youth associations acting as front organisations for the *Muslim Brothers* are extremely popular;
- Since 2000 the number of anti-Semitic aggressions has dramatically increased; these acts—hundreds of which have been recorded over the last 4 years—are mainly the work of young Muslims;
- In schools attended by young Muslims, some kinds of teaching are becoming more and more difficult. For instance it's quite impossible to teach the history of the Shoah; in biology, young men and girls openly question the theory of the origin of life and the evolution of species and humanity;
- In the same schools there is frequently a *de facto* sexual segregation. For instance, in a class room it is common to see the boys grouping themselves in one part of the room and girls in the other;
- In hospitals, the refusal of treatment by a man on a woman or by a woman on a man is becoming more and more common;
- The Islamic presence in European prisons, where the Muslim population is frequently in the majority, is a reality observed in various countries;
- Since September 11, hundreds of suspected terrorists have been arrested in Europe (in France, Belgium, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, The Neth-

erlands etc). But each week police arrest new suspects. This demonstrates that the number of people willing to go from ideas to action is growing;

- Last but not least, dozens if not hundreds of young people—some very young—have been recruited since the summer of 2003 and sent to Iraq;

But the exact scale of the threat is still difficult to determine. The French domestic intelligence service, *les Renseignements Généraux*, has tried to establish a formula to calculate the number of fundamentalists in a given population. Based on an extensive screening of the French scene, the formula is as follows: normally, in a given Muslim population, we'd find an average of 5% of fundamentalists. And, of those 5%, 3% could be considered as dangerous. That means, if we take France and a Muslim population of 6 million people, we'd have 300 000 fundamentalists. And, of those fundamentalists, 9 000 are potentially dangerous.

The most exposed countries are France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Great Britain, and Germany. Outside the European Union, Bosnia is at high risk.

Obviously, it is in those countries that we'll find the highest number of Muslims. That doesn't mean, of course, that the average Muslim population is fundamentalist or dangerous. Most Muslims, even if the trend of a return to the religion is clear and massive, want to live a normal and decent life. But of course, the presence of a large Muslim community offers both better statistical chances of recruitment and places to hide.

But countries that don't have a large Muslim community are still not immune. I was told very recently that in Slovakia—where there is virtually no Muslim community—, a propaganda and financing cell of Hezbollah is in place at the University of Bratislava.

2) *The causes of Islamic extremism in Europe*

The causes of Islamic extremism in Europe are many and various.

First; Muslim communities vary from one country to the next. In France, for instance, most Muslims are of Algerian descent, and as you know Algeria was a French colony for more than 130 years. In 1962, Algerian communities were established in France, and the number of Algerians grew as more came to Europe to find jobs and a better life. After a few years, in the seventies, the French government authorized the "*regroupement familial*" (the reunion of families) and so hundreds of thousands of new immigrants were transplanted into France. In Belgium, Germany and Italy Muslim immigration was not traditional, but was brought about for economic reasons: in the sixties, heavy industry and construction sites needed a work force that was extremely difficult to recruit locally. That was the beginning of immigration in those countries.

When we speak of immigration, we use the concepts of First, Second and Third generation. The First generation is made up of people who initially came to Europe to work. They are now aged 60 or more. The Second generation is made up of the children of those people. They were born outside Europe and came at a very young age, or they were born in Europe. They are aged between 30 and 50. The Third generation is made up of the children of the Second generation. They were born in Europe and they are less than 30 years old.

Sadly we must observe that, historical or not, Muslim immigration was not welcomed in Europe. Racism and exclusion were a reality, and with the beginning of economic decline in the seventies, and the slowing of European economy, problems increased.

So today, parts of the Second and Third generations make no effort to integrate into European society and adopt European humanist values. But it has to be pointed out that, until very recently (in fact in the nineties) absolutely nothing was done to help them integrate. This is the European reality and the European shame. We must live with it and we are paying for it.

To be brief, we had no problems with the First generation. Most of the problems until the very recent past were concentrated in the Second generation, and we had no real intelligence on what was going on with the Third generation. But over the last three to five years, we have been receiving a lot of very negative signals from the Third generation. For instance: violence at school, the rejection of "European values" such as sexual equality, etc.

There is not, obviously, a single explanation for the appearance of Islamic extremism in Europe. We could, nevertheless, try to work towards an explanation:

- The lack of integration and racism lead to some Muslims feeling excluded from the society in which they live;
- Some "lifestyles" (for instance polygamy or the birth rate) reinforce the rejection of the Muslim community by European society;

- The economic and social crisis hit the Muslim communities very hard. If average unemployment in France or Belgium is around 10%, it is commonly 20% within Muslim communities and even 40% among Muslim youth—the famous “Third generation”. This reinforces the feeling of exclusion;
- Democracy, globalisation and a communication culture give people in Europe direct access to information. Events in Bosnia, Somalia, Chechnya, or the Israeli-Palestinian conflict lead some young Muslims to create what the French sociologist Farid Khosrokhovar called “an identity of vicarious humiliation”. Feeling excluded in the country they’re living in, they develop a kind of empathy with all the “Muslim victims in the world” and convince themselves that their own exclusion and the “persecution” of their brothers have the same roots: the rejection of Islam by the Western world;
- Most Muslim clerics, even those who are not radicals, come from abroad and are frequently trained in Saudi Arabia or by Saudi clerics. They have no real knowledge of the societies in which their followers live and, often, as shown by investigations in France and the Netherlands, they don’t speak the local language. So they cannot take a role in easing tensions or helping integration;
- Many European Muslims reject these clerics, accusing them of preaching an “Islam of the rich” and turn to non-official mosques. But this could be a bad idea: in what we call the “Islam of cellars and garages” (after the places where these informal communities meet) clerics are for the most part self-proclaimed. Their knowledge of religion is extremely questionable;
- In all the countries concerned radical clerics took advantage of the above facts to advocate a radical Islam and to attack western values, or European and U.S. policy which they denounce as “anti-Muslim” or pro-Zionist;
- They are helped by the presence in Europe (in the universities and high schools) of refugees who fled their native country because of repression for their Islamist activities. In the universities we find cells of Islamist or terrorist movements such as the Muslim Brothers, Hezbollah or Hamas, Algerian, Moroccan, Tunisian or Turkish groups etc.
- Some of the existing groups were created out of solidarity with “persecuted Muslims” in Afghanistan, Algeria, Bosnia etc. In most cases, these movements were not spontaneous but were launched and manipulated by front organisations for the Muslims Brothers;
- The “last generation” of European Islamism was born with the war in Iraq in 2003. This very young generation is starting to show up in various judicial inquiries into terrorist activities;

3) *The reality of the threat*

The threat is very real and is both political and terrorist.

On the political level, Islamists are trying to subvert western society by contesting humanist values such as sexual equality, freedom of religion, freedom of speech etc. They advocate the creation of religion-based political parties, they advocate the creation of Sharia tribunals to judge civil and personal matters etc.

They know, of course that they will not win those battles, but their hope is to create or deepen the cultural and social divide between Muslims and non-Muslims. The idea in doing so is to radicalise Muslim communities.

On the terrorist level, the Islamists organize logistical and operational cells.

Here, we have quite precise facts and figures.

Since September 11, approximately twenty major terrorist attacks have been averted in Europe. Nevertheless, two terrorist actions were successful:

- The Madrid bombing on March 11, 2004;
- The murder of Dutch film-maker Theo Van Gogh in Amsterdam on November 2, 2004;

If we take the date of March 11, 2004 as a reference, we see that numerous attacks have been averted:

- In April 2004, the action of the Belgian federal police prevented two attacks in preparation, one against a Jewish school in Antwerp, the other against an inauguration ceremony open to the public of a TGV tunnel in the same city;
- In spring 2004, still in Madrid, an attack against the National Audience (the highest jurisdiction of the country, where the well known antiterrorist judge Baltazar Garzon works) was averted;

- In June 2004, an attack of the GICM in Lisbon targeted several prominent people, among them José Manuel Baroso, president of the European Commission;
- The HOFSTAD cell (responsible for the Van Gogh Murder) planned a series of attacks, in particular several targeted murders including that of Somali-born representative Ayaan Hirshi Ali—as well as attacks by booby-trapped vehicle or bomb on Parliament, the security service HQ, Schiphol airport etc. Only the dismantling of the cell following Van Gogh's murder prevented these criminal acts;
- In November, 2004, several men were arrested in Germany while preparing the murder of Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi;
- Terrorists arrested in France as part of the so-called “Iraqi connection” had planned attacks on French soil, particularly on Jewish targets;
- Etc.

This brief run-down, and the number and quality of the planned “targets” show clearly that, contrary to general understanding, striking Europe is still an objective for the Jihadists. And it is not only a question here of hitting European countries allied with the United States in Iraq, as too many Europeans think.

The attacks of March 11 were already being prepared in 2000–2001: at that time, the war in Iraq had not started, and Spanish troops were not present on the ground. When the National Audience was targeted, Spain had already withdrawn from Iraq. Besides, France or Belgium are not in Iraq and both condemned American intervention. Attacks were nevertheless planned in those two countries.

The “need” for the Jihadists to attack Europe is not innate in them, but it is bound to the essence of the old continent. Even if differences exist between the United States and Europe, these two entities, with some other countries (Australia, Canada, Japan, Korea) belong to the same “camp”—that of a “western world” (this qualifier having no ethnocentric character, which is why we can include Asian countries) which shares the same essential democratic values. It is these values which make us the “enemies” of the Islamists. Besides, even if not present militarily in Iraq, many European nations are or were in Afghanistan, and the European Union gave a political undertaking to the new Iraq to help in its reconstruction and stabilization.

These last twelve months also saw a “qualitative” evolution of the threat: more than ever, Islamism is asserting itself as a “mutant virus”. Where since 2001 (and even before) security services faced terrorist structures mostly made up of experienced Jihadists, often with Afghan experience in common, between 25 and 40 years old, more and more we now find very young people, who by definition have no “past” in Islamist circles: French Jihadists killed or arrested in Iraq are from 18 to 20 years old; Samir Azzouz, one of the members of the “cell HOFSTAD” was 18 years old at the time of his arrest and was tracked down after he tried to go to fight in Chechnya at the age of 16. What we are now awaiting is the emergence of a new generation of terrorists: kids who were 12 to 15 years old on September 11 2001, and who have taken a year or two to make the same ideological progress that leads to violence, and which took around their elders ten years or more.

These small groups are more and more often made up of people with strong local ties, able thus to count on the solidarity of local communities and families. These groups are also connected to society's marginal groups and crime circles, which increases the danger they represent: “new Jihadists” have no problem getting hide-outs, weapons or explosives. They are, despite their youth, initiated into the “underground” and have been used to thwart police traps. Occasionally, they manage even to infiltrate the law as organized crime does: one of the members of the HOFSTAD cell was employed as a translator by the AIVD, Dutch civil intelligence.

Finally, the “new” terrorist cells are even more imbricated than before: the HOFSTAD cell based in the Netherlands prepared its attacks while it was also involved in the economic planning of other attacks in Portugal or Spain. A fall in the average age, links with crime, and internationalization are all causes for anxiety among experts.

The threat against the interests of the United States from European terrorists is also very real. Of course, American interests in Europe (embassies, consulates, military personnel, hotels, American companies) are natural targets for Islamists.

But there is more: most of the Second generation people and almost all of the Third generation now hold European passports. So these people can travel freely to the United States or anywhere else they want to. I don't need to remind you that the September 11 attacks were planned in Germany, Great Britain and Spain. And I don't need to remind you of the case of Richard Reid, the so-called “shoe-bomber”.

4) *Links between European Islamists and Al Qaeda*

I think a common mistake is to try to link each and every terrorist attack or plot to Al Qaeda.

Al Qaeda had an “historical role” to play: to build an international terrorist coalition uniting dozens of organisations. Now that this has been achieved, an “International Islamist Terror” exists. And it is very effective. Information, arms and funds are exchanged among groups Moroccan, Algerian, Chechen, Pakistani, Saudi, Iraqi and other organisations. Often these organisations collaborate in very sophisticated projects. The only role of Al Qaeda is to set the general framework of the Jihad, designate targets and give lawful authorization (*Fatwa*) to act. Of course all those organisations or most of them are or were linked to Al Qaeda at one time or another. They take part in the global Jihad “*against the Jews and the Crusaders*” but they concentrate also on their own local problems—just as Al Qaeda concentrates mainly for the moment on Afghanistan and Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and, of course, the United States.

Most of these cells were linked in the past to regional organisations such as the Algerian GIA or GSPC and the Moroccan GICM. But since 2003, with the appearance of the “new Jihadists”, we can see the arrival of new cells which are mostly not connected to those organisations, and are directly implanted in European society.

5) *Ability to carry out attacks*

All of these groups and cells must be considered able to carry out terrorist attacks. The fact that the majority of attacks in recent years failed means that police and intelligence services are working well, and not that the groups concerned are unable to carry out attacks—even though we can sometimes see a kind of amateurism in their *modus operandi*, at the level of the security of the operations they plan to carry out.

More worrying: some of the failed attacks in Europe (in France and in Great Britain) were WMD attacks intending to use chemical products to produce high casualties.

The intelligence we have—notably the fact that some suspected terrorists have shown great interest in recent years in nuclear facilities—suggests they are also thinking of using a “dirty bomb”.

6) *Europe scores some successes but continues to act in a disorganized manner*

Faced with these changes to the threat Europe, as a geopolitical entity, seems hardly any better-armed than it was a year ago. Certainly, the official rhetoric is everywhere the same: the fight against terrorism is a priority and numerous means are being deployed to face it. The reality is sometimes very different. For obvious reasons, I will not dwell on this aspect of things.

At the level of the European Union, progress was certainly made with the appointment of Gijs de Vries as antiterrorism coordinator, but the means he has been given are derisory and his mission essentially symbolic: in reality, antiterrorism remains a matter for the member states. Some work well, but others are not sufficiently aware of the reality of the danger. In any case, a major effort is needed to harmonize legislation and introduce more successful cooperation.

7) *The threat will not diminish in the foreseeable future*

Since March 11 2004, European intelligence and law enforcement services have been keeping up the pressure. Dozens of arrests have been made in Spain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and some other countries where GICM (*Groupe Islamique Combattant Marocain*) networks were broken up. These arrests prevented several attacks, some of which could have had dramatic consequences.

The paradoxical result of this efficiency in the antiterrorist fight has been to anaesthetize part of European public opinion which, though shaken a year ago by the Madrid bombs, now thinks the threat is behind us “because nothing else has happened”. Besides, the massacre of March 11 having been attributed to the fact that Spain was at the time an ally of the United States in Iraq, many people think being a national of a country which is not militarily present in Iraq is a guarantee against terrorism in itself.

Three different elements lead us to believe that the threat will not diminish by in the predictable future.

— *The situation in Iraq is still a powerful factor for mobilization*

The elections at the end of January marked an important stage in the evolution of Iraq, but the toughest part of the job has still to be done. The stabilization of Iraqi society must be stopped at all costs—from the point of view of the Jihadists. Europe and NATO are committed to supporting this stabilization. To divert Europe

from its commitment by the use of violence, and to isolate the new government and the coalition troops, is a strategic objective for the Islamists;

— *Developments in Morocco are of real concern*

The most well-established Islamist organisation in Europe—and the most dangerous—is at present the GICM. The group suffered losses in Europe and in Morocco, but the battle is far from being over in this country where numerous reforms are still needed to fight terrorism. Developments in Morocco in years to come will have a major influence on the situation in Europe. If terrorism is not eradicated, if it remains vigorous, the consequences will be seen on the old continent, and it would be because of the importance of Moroccan communities established there, within which terrorists can recruit new sympathizers.

— *The “new generation” of Islamist terrorism in Europe is only starting to appear*

This “new generation” of terrorism which we hinted at above has hardly begun to appear on the terrorist scene. Recruits come from the “Third generation” of immigration, who we know has identity problems and feels itself the victim of imperfect integration. These problems can push many young people towards violence. We are then confronted with a new situation where diffuse and informal networks of young people who were born in Europe, who know it well and who have scores to settle, could serve as a relay to more structured international organizations, or even try to lead its own “jihad” to take revenge for the real or supposed humiliations felt by these young people.

Given the current situation I have tried to describe to you, it’s hard to be optimistic. The threat both against Europe and from Europe to the United States will remain at a very high level for the foreseeable future. And I’m afraid that a tragedy will be necessary to force the European authorities to face the reality of the problem and to really address the problem posed by Islamism.

The question, in my view, is no longer “if” a tragedy will happen, but “when” it will happen.

Mr. BARRETT. Thank you, Mr. Moniquet.

Gentlemen, thank you very much for your testimony today. Some very sobering thoughts. We really appreciate it.

Let me ask a couple of questions. I am using the assumption that Islamic extremism is growing in Europe. I mean, I think that is kind of what I gathered. Tell me, is that a correct assumption? How fast is it growing?

I know, Mr. Moniquet, you said that this second generation is coming on or the new generation, the younger ones, that we have to really worry about. Talk to me a little bit about the pecking order.

What do I mean by that? I mean is al-Qaeda the big kid on the block? Is it Hezbollah? Who is the chief organization out there that is the one that we need to be the most concerned with? Who is the second, and are there other factions that are growing?

I will open it up to anybody, anybody that wants to try to answer that.

Mr. MONIQUET. I can try to give you the first answer. In the past we had in Europe people linked with precise organizations. Sometimes it was al-Qaeda, or it was the Algerian GSPC, Le Groupement Salafiste Pour La Predication Et Le Combat, which was a part of the GIA, the struggling Islamist group of Algerians. We had people from various other organizations, but now that is changing. Instead we have, I think, one very dangerous organization well represented in Europe, and this is the Moroccan GICM. Because Le Groupement Islamique Combattant Marocain—I do not know in English, so I cannot translate it.

Mr. VIDINO. Moroccan Combatant Group.

Mr. MONIQUET. Moroccan Combatant Group.

The GICM is extremely dangerous and lethal for Europe because, of course, we have important Moroccan communities in Europe. That does not mean that all Moroccans want to perform jihad against Europe or the United States, but in fact, it will give the terrorists the possibility to hide and to have closer contacts.

The main choice now, I think, comes from self-designated jihadists growing up in Europe which have no direct links with other organizations or external organizations and try to find their own way in jihad, they have to settle with the society in which they live.

Mr. BARRETT. Are these organizations that you are talking about, and of course we are talking about the ones in Europe, are they primarily planning just operations in the European theater, or are they doing both? Are they planning in Europe and using that as a staging area for the United States?

Mr. BERGEN. Can I just say about the hierarchy of groups?

Mr. BARRETT. Yes. Yes, please.

Mr. BERGEN. Al-Qaeda scores a 10 obviously. I mean, Richard Reid was an al-Qaeda operative. Al Britani, the guy who was casing the IMF and the World Bank in this city and also Prudential in New Jersey, et cetera, was an al-Qaeda agent. Omar Sheikh, who killed Danny Pearl, was very close to al-Qaeda, so they score 10.

Al-Qaeda the organization has taken a huge hit post 9/11. Al-Qaeda the ideology has done rather well unfortunately, partly because of the Iraq war and the unpopularity of that war amongst a lot of Muslims.

When you look at the Mike's Place attack, which we have talked about and which I think is a very interesting kind of model of what could happen in this country when you have 2 second-generation middle-class Brits walking in and doing a suicide attack in Israel, they attended a sort of al-Qaeda support group in London called Al Muhajiroun. That is probably where they were radicalized. They went to Damascus and hooked up with Hamas. That is probably where they made the move into the suicide terrorism realm.

Unfortunately this is the future. It would be great if we could say, "Hey, it is just al-Qaeda or this organization out there," but if it is this wider ideological movement that is a lot more amorphous, and that is, I think, what we are facing in the future.

The good news about the ideological movement is it is less organized. The Madrid attacks only took several months to plan and was funded by the marijuana trade. These guys organize very quickly. The 9/11 attacks took 5 years to plan, basically.

If we talk about March 11 as being a 3/11, we are going to see a lot more 3/11s. I do not think we are going to see a lot more 9/11s for all sorts of obvious reasons. That is the future.

Mr. BARRETT. One last question, and then I am going to turn it over to my Ranking Member. A couple of things.

Number one, do you see a coordination between the groups from Hezbollah and al-Qaeda? I mean, are the larger groups and the smaller groups starting to realize that there are, for lack of better words, strength in numbers? They are starting to communicate with each other?

Talk to me just briefly about if something major does happen in the European Union, is there a coordination between the European Union to have some type of consistent response, a coordinated response between the countries?

Mr. LEVITT. There is little, if any, coordination when you get to groups that are not considered al-Qaeda affiliates, which include groups like Hamas and Hezbollah, especially those which are not part of the al-Qaeda affiliate concentric circles. There is no kind of headquarters-to-headquarters memorandum of understanding, you know, hashed out between their leaders as to how the cooperation will exist, but there is increasing interpersonal relationships between jihadists who cut across group lines. And so the kind of perfect little square boxes that we used to think about with Hamas here, and al-Qaeda there, do not fit so much. Hamas is not part of al-Qaeda or Hezbollah, which gets at least \$100 million a year from Iran and tends to be more separate and aside than other groups in terms of its relationships to other global jihadists.

There are relationships between individuals, and they tend to primarily come from two specific areas. The first is the Muslim Brotherhood international network and so you will have people who are more closely affiliated with the global jihad, al-Qaeda, funding Hamas, Islamic Jihad. We have seen it in this country—investigations not 8 miles away from where we are sitting as the crow flies in northern Virginia. We have seen it throughout Europe as well.

The second is the training camps, most recently of course and extensively in Afghanistan, but not only training camps. Also in Sudan, in the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon, in Iran, et cetera. What we saw in 3/11—the attacks in Madrid—is a perfect example of the latest generation, the latest iteration where people are being put in touch with other people to carry out near term attacks. I would say that this is not entirely new because in its heyday even al-Qaeda, the central core, would plan long-term attacks over a long period of time, the most spectacular attacks, but would fund and train others.

Consider Ahmed Ressam, who is being sentenced today for his role in the millennial plot, to conduct smaller scale, but still very large and deadly attacks, you know, during that time period. I think Peter is right. I think we are going to see many more 3/11s. I do not think we can discount the 9/11s, but when we do see attacks, whether they are the 3/11- or the 9/11-type, we should expect them not to be run out of some central headquarters, but rather to be a conglomeration of regional networks that are put together and work on something together.

Mr. BARRETT. So they are very effectively morphing into something that is ever changing.

Yes, Mr. Moniquet?

Mr. MONIQUET. Yes. If I may add some more to what Matthew has said?

If we take the Hofstad cell—the Hofstad cell is the terrorist cell who assassinated Sir van Gogh in Amsterdam in November 2004. They planned a series of very high-level attacks in the Netherlands against the MPs, against the security service of the Schipol Airport, which is one of the most important. But they were also involved in

the planning of an operation in Portugal, in Spain. They were also thinking about the possibility to attack in the United States.

This small cell of approximately 15 people was connected to other cells in Madrid, in Lisbon, and even in Russia, in the Chechen Republic—or the Chechen area, excuse me. So those small groups try to find a way to connect with other organizations and to get or give some help from or to those organizations and to find those ways usually.

Mr. BARRETT. Gotcha. Let us go back to one of the questions that Chairman Gallegly specifically kind of threw out there. Weapons of mass destruction.

I know that most of the attacks thus far have been on a, you could say, smaller scale. Some of them not too small, but relatively speaking to weapons of mass destruction on a smaller scale.

Tell me about the possible use, the coordination. How close are we, in your opinion, to a major attack with a weapon of mass destruction?

Mr. BERGEN. I think that the cases we have seen in Europe since 9/11 involving WMD, many of them have been less important than you might imagine. There was a plot perhaps to introduce cyanide into the water supply of the United States Embassy in Rome. It seems that that plot was not very serious.

There were some people experimenting with ricin in London in 2003. This would be a very effective assassination tool. The case against the people involved in this has sort of collapsed.

There were some indications that people arrested in Britain recently were trying to extract something called americium out of smoke alarms in an effort to make a dirty radiological bomb. Scientists agree that this would not be particularly effective, this particular ingredient.

However, since radioactive material suitable for radiological weapons are so widely dispersed, I think it is only a matter of time before somebody works it out. As I indicated, a radiological bomb attack in a major European capital would have a 9/11 effect, I think. Even if it did not kill a lot of people it would cause so much panic.

Mr. LEVITT. If I could just add to that?

Mr. BARRETT. Sure.

Mr. LEVITT. First of all, what we have learned from the past few weeks and months about the AQ Khan smuggling network should give raise to concern. You know, the intelligence community traditionally defines threat in its most simplistic equation as intent plus capability. No one doubts their intent or willingness, certainly among the most radical of the global jihadists, to inflict as much pain on us as possible. It is their capability that tends not to match that intent.

In those few instances where they seem to have had some beginning capability, we investigated it thoroughly and found it not to be as scary as originally thought. The ricin case in London is a case in point. Having said that, this is something, an issue on which we let down our guard at our peril.

Mr. BARRETT. Gotcha. Talk to me about another subject. Do you see any connection, a major connection between some of the radical groups in Europe and the Gulf in Iraq and the area?

Mr. LEVITT. Yes.

Mr. BARRETT. Is Europe becoming a training ground for Iraq and vice versa?

Mr. VIDINO. Yes. Absolutely. Actually, what we have been seeing over the last 2 years is a very effective recruiting effort by various Islamist groups in Europe for Iraq. Zarqawi's organization or network, which is mostly a loosely connected network, has cells throughout Europe. There have been reports that at least 10 suicide bombers who blew themselves up in Iraq came from Europe and were recruited between Germany, France, and Italy.

One interesting thing about Iraq is that we see what we were talking about before, the fact that we have both organized groups acting—al-Qaeda, Ansar al-Islam—and at the same time we see that young Muslims from Europe's ghettos without connections to known terrorist organizations travel on their own to Iraq and just carry out their attacks. There was a group of 10 teenagers from the suburbs of Paris without known connections to terrorist groups who just traveled to Iraq on their own. Five of them were killed in suicide attacks. Two of them are detained. They were found in Fallujah fighting United States forces. So this is what we see in Iraq, both the organized groups and the loose cannons, the lone walks in a certain way.

Mr. MONIQUET. We could add a nice story on the recruiting of people in France for the jihad in Iraq. In March 2004, some people were arrested in a suburb of Paris for terrorist-related activities. The judge could keep them 4 days without charging them under the French law, and he just found one thing. They were recruiting people for the jihad in Iraq. As it was not considered by the judge as a direct threat against the French interests, he just released those men after the 4 days. That is the way Europe takes the threat against the allies in Iraq.

Mr. BARRETT. Interesting.

Mr. VIDINO. That is a problem in most countries. Recruiting for jihad in Iraq, but not doing any act against France or Germany, is actually not considered a crime. Sometimes we try to get them for some other minor crimes, be it, you know, false documents or smuggling——

Mr. MONIQUET. Arms.

Mr. VIDINO [continuing]. Of arms——

Mr. BARRETT. Right.

Mr. VIDINO [continuing]. But not for recruitment. That is the problem. We have known recruiters still recruiting individuals in Europe and the authorities cannot touch them.

Mr. BARRETT. Wow.

Mr. BERGEN. Can I add one thought to that?

Mr. BARRETT. Absolutely, Mr. Bergen.

Mr. BERGEN. Which is, I mean, we have to keep this in perspective on the European front. The number of people recruited in Europe to go to Iraq—I think we are looking at, you know, dozens, scores, not hundreds.

If you look at the people who actually have died in Iraq, something like 61 percent of the foreign fighters who are dying are from Saudi Arabia. Obviously this is worrisome that there is recruitment

in Europe, but as a percentage of the actual foreign fighters, I think it is a relatively small percentage.

Mr. BARRETT. Gotcha.

Mr. VIDINO. True. But at the same time, the problem is about these people going back to Europe with training, with experience, with links to other people. Once back from the battlefield, they have a certain position of importance within the radical Muslim community in their own countries like what happened with Afghanistan or Bosnia or Chechnya, and therefore they can recruit new people, being in a certain position of authority.

Mr. BARRETT. Battle-tested veterans with greater communications with greater people. Interesting.

Gentlemen, thank you very much. I am going to turn it back to the real Chairman. Chairman Gallegly?

Mr. GALLEGLY [presiding]. I thank the gentleman for pinch hitting here. I had a briefing over in Intelligence. I figured out, in my 19 years here, how to be in two places at once, but I have not figured out how to be in three places at once when they are in different States. We are making progress, and I appreciate your patience very much.

I do have just a couple questions here, and maybe I could give the first one off to Mr. Bergen. Recent publications have talked a lot about how Europe might be used as a staging ground for attacks on the United States. I know that there has been some discussion on that before. Maybe you could just elaborate a little bit for the record for me?

Mr. BERGEN. Yes. I think we have seen, historically, that has always been the case, whether it was the 9/11 plot, whether it was Richard Reid. Ramzi Yousef, who was the mastermind of the first Trade Center attack in 1993, studied electrical engineering in Wales. We have seen, historically, that the most significant terrorist attacks in the last decade have this strong European component.

As we have discussed, with the increasing alienation amongst European Muslims, I think that trend can only accelerate. We know from history that this was true, and we can make, I think, a fairly accurate prediction in the future that this will be the case.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Vidino, maybe you could try this for me.

Recognizing that there is a transition taking place in the Balkans, I would like to get your opinion as to how much of a terrorist threat exists in the Balkans today. How can it be countered when you consider the weak institutions and the declining United States troop commitments in the region? We see that as an ongoing issue.

Maybe after you have a response to that, maybe Mr. Moniquet could give us a——

Mr. VIDINO. Sure. I think the threat is not that big because the numbers are relatively small. There is a number of people who are basically foreign fighters, Arab fighters who have remained in Bosnia and some of them in Kosovo after the end of the war. They gained Bosnian citizenship. The reports say they have established terrorist training camps. Nevertheless, between what the U.N. and what the European forces and what the United States forces have been doing, I do not think the threat is that large.

The other thing where Islamists have failed in Bosnia is the radicalization of the Bosnian population. One attempt was made by the Islamists to radicalize the local population as they did in other conflicts, for example, in Afghanistan. I think mostly we can say the attempt failed because the Bosnian population, the Bosnian Muslims, are pretty much secularized, and they did not follow the radical interpretation of Islam that was trying to be spread. Definitely there are some activities where there was a fear that something might have happened during the Olympics. There were reports of some cells operating in Bosnia and Kosovo trying to carry out an operation during the Olympics in Athens, but nothing happened.

I would say I would put the numbers at a few dozen individuals who are carrying out activities there.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Moniquet, do you have any other——

Mr. MONIQUET. Yes. Basically I agree with Mr. Vidino. I will just say that, in December 2001, the Bosnian Government deported, approximately, between 100 and 200 people who were living in Bosnia and which were European or non-European jihadists. It seems now that some of those people came back to Bosnia and it seems we have some signs that Bosnia was used as a transit place for going to Italy and to Iraq for some people in the last months since May or April 2003. Of course, the figure is small, approximately some dozen people. Another point is that it seems that we have a concern in Macedonia with the presence, not of jihadists, but for training and an ideological center near Skopje which seemed to be involved in extremist activities.

As you pointed out, the States are extremely weak in Bosnia and in Macedonia. It could, in the future, be a serious threat.

Mr. GALLEGLY. I guess my main concern is the fact that it is pretty common knowledge that we have a declining presence there, and in view of that declining presence, does that present a greater potential concern that we should be addressing? Do you see that in and of itself?

While the current status is not as significant as it potentially could be, do you see that potentially escalating as a direct result of the declining presence?

Mr. MONIQUET. Do you mean in the Balkans?

Mr. GALLEGLY. Yes, in the Balkans.

Mr. MONIQUET. Yes. I think the Balkans must be scrutinized in the future both by the United States and Europe because the problem is that nothing is fixed in the Balkans. The Dayton process and the so-called peace process seem to work at the moment. They seem to work at the moment, but I would not be so affirmative in the future.

If something is going wrong in the Balkans in the coming years it could be a new field and a new territory for the jihadists in Europe.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Yes. I had the opportunity to travel to that region just last fall, and it was a real eye-opener for me to see the dynamics of what is going on in the Balkans. It is not like we have here in the United States or in most places in Europe, as you know all too well.

Mr. Levitt, do you think that incidents like the van Gogh murder or the Madrid train bombings have had a lasting impact on Europeans, or do you think they really realize the extent of the threat in their society today as a result of those incidents?

Mr. LEVITT. There is no question that it has had a tremendous impact on Europeans. Both these attacks, the 3/11 attacks more than anything else, but what that is going to mean operationally in terms of changes in legal systems, greater cooperation bilaterally, and strengthening Interpol, is yet to be determined. Bureaucracies are powerful and resistant to change, and we can see in our own country how 9/11 sparked tremendous change and certainly affected us and how far we have yet to go. So I think that, unfortunately, 3/11 has not cured everything.

It is indicative also, unfortunately, of what has yet to come in terms of further acts of terrorism. That it has had a serious impact on the Europeans, on us for that matter too, is irrefutable. That there is movement in the right direction is certainly the case and that there will be more attacks before all the proper changes are made is also, I think, unfortunately a given.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Vidino, do you have any comments on that?

Mr. VIDINO. I agree. Unfortunately, for example, the Madrid bombing was widely perceived as a punishment for Iraq, for staying a supporter of the Iraqi war. I think just the timing of the attack was because of Iraq.

For many other reasons, some of them even religious—the fact that al-Qaeda perceived Spain as the mythical land that was in Arab hands centuries ago.

Mr. GALLEGLY. So you think Europeans may have looked at that as a one-shot type?

Mr. VIDINO. Europeans may have. It was clear with the outcome of the elections. It was clearly revealed that most Spaniards at least, but a lot of people in Europe, perceived that as a punishment for Iraq. Holland might have been a different thing because we have probably Europe's most tolerant society and still it is attacked by the Islamists. Actually, somehow I probably feel that Holland was perceived and had a larger impact than Madrid, even though it was just the killing of one person instead of 200, but somehow it gave a bigger shock to Europe.

What is this going to mean? I probably have to agree with Matt. I do not know if this is going to have a big impact. Holland itself declared that it was going to, and I am quoting what the Prime Minister said, "fight a war against Islamic terrorism." No laws have been changed. Yes, Holland introduced a law where they were going to train imams in Holland; teach them to speak Dutch. There have been two trials, actually one trial and one administrative trial, against some members of the Hofstad group. They were acquitted because Dutch laws are among the most liberal in Europe, and most of the intelligence provided by Dutch agencies was not accepted by the judge.

Not much has changed. I have to agree with Matt. It probably will take a long time. Incorporation among European countries has partially improved after that, but still the bureaucracy, problems with the languages, the reluctance of most European intelligence

agencies to share information with others. It is difficult to overcome.

Mr. GALLEGLY. The one issue though would be clear and undeniable to me is not so much the issue that it was retaliation or otherwise, but the vulnerability and how do you protect yourself from every potential threat? How many people can be exposed in the case of the Madrid bombing with such a relatively low funding of money to create such horrific damage?

Has that not given a greater awareness of vulnerability, or is it kind of a denial thing?

Mr. VIDINO. It has, but it is probably kind of a denial. I remember the day after the election there was an interview with a Spanish voter in *The New York Times*, and he said, "I changed my mind and I voted for the Socialist party because now probably al-Qaeda will forget about us now that we changed the Government."

Mr. GALLEGLY. Do you see any of these incidents—and maybe Mr. Bergen can jump in on this—having an effect on the way that Europe looks at their immigration policies?

Mr. BERGEN. No doubt that is true in the Netherlands where there is a huge backlash. The Netherlands thinks of itself as a very liberal place, and they now feel that their culture is sort of being besieged.

It is just human nature to only react to things that are in your neighborhood. The Indonesians did not think they had a problem until Bali. We really did not grasp the problem until 9/11. I think the English, for instance, will not entirely grasp the problem until an attack happens in London. I think that is just human nature. Madrid was sort of a wake-up call, but not sufficient.

The Europeans have done some concrete measures. They now have a counterterrorism czar whose powers are sort of like the drug czar in this country; not particularly much, but they recognize that there is something that they need to do. The Europeans have a firewall problem, but they have 25 firewalls because they are different countries.

The evidentiary sharing is also a problem, but I think that they are making some bureaucratic efforts to actually reorganize themselves in such a way that they can deal with the problem.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Moniquet, does the U.S. visa waiver program pose any security risk, in your view?

Mr. MONIQUET. I am in a very delicate position to answer this question because as a European, I profit from this program of course, but I will say Europe now is a dangerous place with dangerous people. Not a lot of dangerous people, but at least a few thousand in all Europe. That means that if I was American, I would scrutinize very, very deeply this program and would think about it, but I am not American.

Mr. GALLEGLY. It is really interesting to me. Maybe, Mr. Bergen, you could give us your assessment of that and maybe Mr. Levitt as well of course from a different perspective. How do you view our visa waiver program?

Mr. BERGEN. As an American citizen, I do not benefit from it, but I think the visa waiver program needs to be looked at very carefully. The problem of course is that it would be a public diplomacy disaster to make it very arduous as a European to come to this

country. On the other hand, there might be a targeted approach where DHS could have agents posted in certain European countries who might actually do some formal face-to-face interviews with a number of the people who are applying. Obviously you would only target those people based on some reasonable intelligence that they needed to be targeted for an interview, so I think it needs to be reviewed, but not to be massively changed because I think that would be very counterproductive.

Mr. GALLEGLY. I am delighted you are supporting my proposal.

Mr. Vidino, would you like to give a shot at that?

Mr. VIDINO. I agree because the financial and the diplomacy impact of changing the program completely would probably be too big.

The thing that probably both the United States and Europe has to improve is sharing information. The United States probably should know in advance who the people flying in from Europe are, even if they carry European passports. There should be more intelligence sharing. That is the only way to avoid probably just changing completely the visa waiver program.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Levitt?

Mr. LEVITT. I think we are all in agreement. There is nothing more important than making sure that we keep the right people out of this country. The second half of that equation, however, is making sure that we let the right people in. We are doing ourselves no favors if we accomplish the former but not the latter, and so it is extremely important to balance out the need to keep bad people out with the need to let the right people in.

Some of the testimony given earlier suggests that we have a particular interest in Europe given the fact that extremists have moved to Europe and have married people there. A lot of extremists are first, second, or third generation Europeans of Middle Eastern descent. If you look at people like Richard Reid, the Shoe Bomber, and others, there is significant reason to be concerned that we should not be letting into the country anyone who has a European passport. That does not mean that the waiver program itself is flawed. It means we have to figure out a way to implement it smartly.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Well, I think I was speaking more specifically to the waiver program the way it exists today, not to eliminate immigration.

For those of us that have been around here for a while and, in fact, I think most Americans recognize that we are a nation of immigrants, and that is what makes this country great, but we are also a nation of laws, and it is a delicate juggling act to balance those two. But there is growing concern, at least in my view, that if we have erred it has not been always on the side of caution.

Mr. LEVITT. No, absolutely not. If I may add, it is not just people with operational intent that we need to be concerned about. You know, there is no doubt that there are people in this country today who may not be radical today. Maybe they are, but they are going to be on our watch lists sometime in the future.

To think about people who have gone through American schools and who come back to bite us, they include people like Khalid Sheikh Muhammad from al-Qaeda, Musa Abu Mazook from Hamas, Mazen Najar from Islamic Jihad. We do not have enough

time to go through the entire list. It is not just people with operational intent today, but people who are going through our schools and are getting an education here often in technical sciences and engineering and are going home and becoming radicals.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Well, all too often it appears that number is growing rather than declining, and of course that is really the major purpose of this hearing today.

I want to thank you for being here. I apologize for the fact that we did not have greater participation on the part of our Subcommittee, but as it just worked out today with the voting schedule and everything. I am not apologizing, but I am trying to explain. I am a victim of that myself.

As you just heard, the bells went off for another vote. Nevertheless, I want to express to you my appreciation for your testimony, for answering the questions very candidly, and I look forward to working with all of you in the near future. This issue is not going to go away, and it is going to give us great cause for continued vigilance.

I stand ready at any time any of you would like to throw a tidbit of your thoughts toward me or any Member of this Subcommittee. I welcome it, and I thank you all.

With that, the Subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:26 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

RESPONSES FROM MR. LORENZO VIDINO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, "THE INVESTIGATIVE PROJECT" TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE TED POE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Question:

We know from various reports that Saudi Arabia funds extremist Islam known as Wahhabism all over the world. Here in the United States, reports reveal that even the Saudi embassy had pamphlets encouraging religious bigotry, and Saudi funded mosques carried inflammatory, anti-American literature paid for and printed by the government of Saudi Arabia. What role has Saudi Arabia played in funding extremist, fundamental Islam through mosques and organizations in Europe—especially in the Balkans where religious tensions are perhaps the highest? What can Western nations do to discourage outside funding of Islamic extremism?

Response:

As in every part of the world, the Saudi government and Saudi charities have richly financed the spread of Wahhabism and Salafism in Europe. Saudi-financed mosques, Islamic centers, conferences, books, and tapes have influenced and radicalized thousands of European Muslims, creating the ideal breeding ground for fundamentalist activities.

In 2004 the AIVD, Holland's internal security agency, perfectly portrayed the role played by Saudi Arabia in a report by the telling title "Saudi influences in the Netherlands. Links between the Salafist mission, radicalization processes and Islamic terrorism":

"The combination of charity and missionary activities for a long time marked the financing activities of the Saudi government. Within the Saudi government an important role was played by the Ministry for Islamic Affairs that via the Saudi diplomatic representations abroad made funds available to the Muslim communities residing in these countries. Often even more important in volume was the financial support from prominent Saudi private benefactors and large organisations, which since the 1960s and 1970s have undertaken worldwide charity and missionary activities (in itself, incidentally, a legitimate combination which also applies to many Western religiously inspired aid organisations). These institutions, such as the *Muslim World League* (also known as *Rabita Trust*), *Al-Haramain*, *World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY)* and *International Islamic Relief Organisation (IIRO)*, are officially known as 'non-governmental organisations (NGOs)', but in fact maintain close ties with parts of the Saudi establishment. Although to the outside world they strongly emphasise their strong humanitarian aims, these organisations are primarily focused on propagating the Salafist interpretation of Islam. They concentrate on setting up and supporting mosque centres with an orthodox persuasion, hiring, training and subsidising imams with a like persuasion, publishing and disseminating Salafist literature, et cetera."

The AIVD also described the effects of the spread of Salafism within the Dutch Muslim community:

"Present-day Salafism works like a magnet on some sections of the Muslim communities in Western countries, in particular on some groups of Muslim youngsters, the main reason being that it offers seemingly simple solutions to the problem of identity that many of them struggle with. As said before, basically Salafism seeks to restore 'pure Islam', i.e. Islam as it was practiced by the Prophet Mohammed and his first followers. Present-day Salafism provides these Muslims with a kind of new identity as a 'pure Muslim', propagating a simple formula for this purpose. It contends that it is possible to become a 'pure Muslim' by banning, sometimes even com-

bating, anything that is considered 'un-Islamic'. The interpretation of this doctrine may lead to radical views in some followers, namely when 'un-Islamic' is equated with other religious convictions and social views. Exceptions apart, present-day Salafism, in its two manifestations discussed, is to a large extent determined by this intolerant position. A direct link can therefore be made between present-day Salafism and the radicalisation processes within some sections of the Muslim communities in the Netherlands."

The process described by the AIVD is not limited to Holland, but is common to any European country. Over the last two/three years, most Western European countries have decided to at least examine the negative influence of mosques and schools that espouse Wahhabi/Salafi views. Nevertheless, a widespread reluctance in interfering in religious issues has stopped many European countries from effectively cracking down on radical mosques.

Question:

Since 1999, 120 ancient churches and monasteries have been destroyed by Islamic mobs in U.N. controlled Kosovo. How can the United Nation's presence in Kosovo and the Balkans be more effective in dealing with Islamic extremism in Europe?

Response:

[As of press time, no response was received.]

RESPONSE FROM MR. MATTHEW LEVITT, DIRECTOR, TERRORISM STUDIES PROGRAM, THE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE FOR NEAR EAST POLICY, TO QUESTION SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE TED POE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Question:

What role has Saudi Arabia played in funding extremist, fundamental Islam through mosques and organizations in Europe—especially in the Balkans where religious tensions are perhaps the highest? What can Western nations do to discourage outside funding of Islamic extremism?

Response:

Saudi funded institutions in Europe, including the Balkans, continue to fuel radicalism and teach a fundamentalist variation of Islam that is often then used to recruit new terrorists and justify acts of terrorism.

Just last week *The Financial Times* reported on the case of Ali-bin Mussalim, a Swiss-based businessman who had "been providing indirect investment services for al-Qaeda, investing funds for bin Laden, and making cash deliveries on request to the al-Qaeda organization."¹ Mussalim was linked to Bank Al-Taqwa (since closed) and its founder, Youssef Nada, both of which have been designated as Specially Designated Global Terrorists by the Treasury Department and as Al Qaeda associates by the UN 1267 Committee. Interestingly, Mussalim carried a Saudi diplomatic passport. Mysteriously, a month after these claims later emerged, Mr. bin Mussalim was found dead in his residence in Laussane in June 2004.²

A particularly revealing case involves terror incitement at the King Fahd Academy in Bonn, Germany.

In October 2003, the Saudi-funded King Fahd Academy near Bonn, Germany, came under investigation for its alleged link to militant Islamic extremism. At the urging of German authorities, the school suspended one of its teachers who allegedly implored students to wage a holy war against the west, using Friday prayers at the school mosque to urge students to take part in jihad.

German education officials noted that the academy was becoming a magnet for those who support Islamic militancy as more and more "hardline" Muslims moved near Bonn to enroll their children at the academy, including several parents who were under investigation for suspected links to al-Qaeda. The parent of one student was put on trial in September 2003 on charges of being linked the al-Tawhid group and its plot to attack Jewish targets in Germany.

Juergen Rotors, who heads the city government of Cologne, western Germany, wanted to close the academy, but in the end agreed to allow the school to remain open. However, Rotors stated that the school would be subject to strict oversight

¹ As stated in a January 2002 letter to Claude Nicati, Switzerland's deputy chief federal prosecutor, from George Wolfe, then US Treasury deputy counsel. Fidler, Stephen. "Al Qaeda suspect 'had envoy's passport' TERROR FINANCING." *Financial Times*. 28 April 2005.

² Fidler, Stephen. "Al Qaeda suspect 'had envoy's passport' TERROR FINANCING." *Financial Times*. 28 April 2005.

measures, which would be monitored by a supervisory committee to ensure compliance. Teachers and staff with connections to extremists would be replaced, as would those who preached violence or aggressive fundamentalism.³

International investigations continue to tie Saudi charities to terrorist activity the world over. Several Islamic extremists have been linked to the Saudi-funded al Nur Mosque in Berlin. One of them, Tunisian al Qaeda associate Ihsan Garnooui, was believed to have been plotting an attack in Berlin. Muhammad Fakihi, chief of the Saudi embassy's Islamic Affairs Section in Berlin, confessed to doling out embassy funds according to the instructions of "close friends" of bin Laden.⁴

An Italian wiretap first publicly reported by the *LA Times* revealed that in one intercepted phone conversation, a senior al Qaeda operative in the Middle East is overheard assuring his subordinate in Europe about funding, saying, "Don't ever worry about money, because Saudi Arabia's money is your money."⁵

Saudi supported charity organizations in Bosnia have also served as a base for financing and organizing attacks.

There have been several cases of Saudi charities using their offices in Bosnia as fronts for supporting terrorism. In March 2002, Bosnian police raided the offices of an Islamic charity called Bosnian Ideal Future, which is the local name under which Benevolence International Foundation (a Saudi-based charity) operated in Bosnia. Officials seized weapons, plans for making bombs, booby-traps and false passports.⁶ A day later, the U.S. Embassy in Bosnia was shut down for four days, from March 20–24, after Bosnian officials informed the embassy of a possible threat. According to a Bosnian official, al-Qaeda terrorists reportedly met in Sofia, Bulgaria, where they decided that "in Sarajevo something will happen to Americans similar to New York last September."⁷ Two days before the Embassy reopened, Bosnian police arrested Munib Zahiragic, the head of the local Benevolence office and a former officer in the Bosnian Muslim secret police.

In December 2001, U.S. authorities raided the Chicago offices of the Benevolence International Foundation. The foundation's videos and literature glorify martyrdom, and, according to the charity's newsletter, seven of its officers were killed in battle last year in Chechnya and Bosnia. In March 2002, Bosnian officials investigating foreign humanitarian organizations reported funds were missing from the Bosnian office of Benevolence International.⁸

However, these Saudi links to Bosnia-based charities should not surprise, as a recently disclosed 1996 CIA document indicates that as early as 1994 Washington was warning that in 1992 Saudi nationals gave some \$150 million to Islamic charities active in Bosnia and implicated in terrorism.⁹

Furthermore, evidence was found that indicates that the Saudi High Commission for Aid to Bosnia supports terrorist acts perpetrated against U.S. targets. In October 2001, NATO forces raided the Saudi High Commission for Aid to Bosnia, a charity founded by Prince Selman bin Abdul-Aziz and supported by King Fahd. Among the items found at the Saudi charity were before-and-after photographs of the World Trade Center, U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, and the USS *Cole*; maps of government buildings in Washington; materials for forging U.S. State Department badges; files on the use of crop duster aircraft; and anti-Semitic and anti-American material geared toward children.¹⁰

Additionally, six Algerians were incarcerated at Guantanamo Bay's Camp X-Ray for plotting an attack on the U.S. embassy in Sarajevo, including an employee of the Saudi High Commission for Aid to Bosnia and another cell member who was in telephone contact with Osama bin Laden aid and al-Qaeda operational commander Abu Zubayda. Authorities are now trying to track down \$41 million of the commission's missing operating funds. While there is no information suggesting the

³"Germany orders curbs on Saudi-funded school linked to extremists," Agence France Presse, October 28, 2003.

⁴Matthew Levitt, "The Two Faces of Saudi Arabia," *Weekly Standard*, June 30, 2003, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC06.php?CID=479>

⁵Sebastian Rotella, "A Road to Ansar Began in Italy: Wiretaps are Said to Show how al-Qaeda Sought to Create in Northern Iraq a Substitute for Training Camps in Afghanistan," *The Los Angeles Times*, 28 April 2003.

⁶Alexandar S. Dragicevic, "U.S. Embassy in Bosnia Reopens," Associated Press, March 25, 2002.

⁷"Al-Qa'ida Terrorists Planned Bosnia Attack, Official Says," Associated Press, March 23, 2002.

⁸"Al-Qa'ida Terrorists Planned Bosnia Attack, Official Says," Associated Press, March 23, 2002.

⁹Matthew Levitt, "The Two Faces of Saudi Arabia," *The Weekly Standard*, June 30, 2003, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC06.php?CID=479>

¹⁰Matthew Levitt, "Tackling the Financing of Terrorism in Saudi Arabia," PolicyWatch # 609, March 11, 2002, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=1487>

involvement or knowledge of senior Saudi officials, this is not the only Saudi charity linked to terrorist activity.¹¹

Yet another example of a Saudi-based charity using Bosnia as a base for terror fundraising is the al-Haramain Foundation. In March 2002, a joint U.S.-Saudi order froze the accounts of al-Haramain's Bosnian and Somali offices, which were linked to the al-Qaeda-associated Egyptian al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya and Somali al-Itihad al-Islamiyah, respectively. But in August 2002, Saudi pressure led Bosnian authorities to release the assets of the Bosnian office and renew its operating license. By September, the Saudi press reported that al-Haramain's operations in Bosnia and Somalia were actually expanding.¹²



¹¹ Matthew Levitt, "Tackling the Financing of Terrorism in Saudi Arabia," PolicyWatch # 609, March 11, 2002, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=1487>

¹² Matthew Levitt, "Combating Terrorist Financing, Despite the Saudis," PolicyWatch # 673, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, November 1, 2002, <http://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC05.php?CID=1551>